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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to help school districts develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. It outlines the importance of generating a consolidated plan to reduce duplication, identify children's needs, and coordinate funds from various programs. Consisting of 10 modules, the guide addresses all components of the planning process and offers suggestions for the wise use of resources, particularly as such use relates to districtwide planning. Each module is contained in an individual booklet and addresses a specific plan component: Module 1: Overview; Module 2: Establishing the Team; Module 3: Creating Vision and Mission Statements; Module 4: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment; Module 5: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies; Module 6: Planning Professional Development; Module 7: Linking the Pieces; Module 8: Budgeting the Plan; Module 9: Implementing the Plan; and Module 10: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan. Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical-assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams, and planning teams may use the modules to work independently. Each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses. (RJM)

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Making Resources Matter: A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan Modules One [to] Ten.

Diana Bowman and Jean Williams

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MODULE ONE

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

1 OVERVIEW

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

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Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

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By
Diana Bowman
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Making Resources Matter

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About Module One

Module One explains consolidated planning and identifies its basis in the 1994 *Improving America's Schools Act*. The explanation provides the rationale for consolidated planning and discusses how this approach to using resources benefits students.

The opening vignette is a compilation of conversations centered around the issue of consolidated planning from district and school perspectives. The vignette may serve as a starting point for any school district that is considering consolidated planning.

Overview

Planning how to use resources in the Yorktown school district is a different ball game these days, and people are a lot happier about it. The Title I coordinator explained, "We're developing one plan for all the programs; we no longer have to submit a separate application for each program. Consolidated planning saves time."

"Well, that's certainly true, but even more, consolidated planning helps us use resources more effectively," added the Title IV coordinator. "See, for years I've complained that I really haven't had enough funds to make much of an impact on creating safe and drug-free environments in the schools. Once I started talking to the Title I coordinator, I realized that we could pool our resources and have broader programs that meet the intent of both Title I and Title IV. Our after-school program is now a model across the state."

"I really like the planning process," noted a resource teacher who serves on the planning team. "It just makes a lot of sense. We look at our needs. I mean, really look at the data across the district, set our goals, figure out how to achieve those goals, and then plan how to use all resources for the programs and strategies selected to achieve the goals. This really is a lot better than looking at the money available and figuring out how to use it. Our programs before consolidated planning were isolated shots in the dark that were too fragmented to have much of an impact."

An elementary school teacher commented, "You know, the best part is that we're starting to see improvement in student achievement. It's like tug-of-war. If we're all pulling in the same direction, there's a lot of strength there to pull everyone along. There is consistency across the whole district. The kids get reinforcement across grade levels, from subject to subject, and in school and at home. This is a pretty basic concept, but it's really making a difference."

Today's educators are charged with providing equitable and meaningful opportunities for all students to master rigorous subject matter at a level that will prepare them for entrance into the 21st-century workforce. Educators are increasingly held accountable for what happens inside classrooms and are expected to ensure that school or district curricula, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned with their state's approved curricula and assessments. Individual strategies for improving educational programs are giving way to schoolwide reforms designed to improve every aspect of a school's culture. In short, greater demands are being placed on educators' time and energy. At the same time, many schools face significant budget cuts, reductions in the number of administrators and support staff, and reallocation of funds.

With increased demands and limited resources, meaningful educational reform can only occur if all available resources are used in a focused and efficient manner that enables all programs to contribute to the achievement of common goals.

Consolidated planning integrates programs so resources are maximized and program fragmentation and duplication are minimized. By examining all programs and resources in light of school, district, or state needs and goals, programs can be designed to support initiatives that address these needs and goals in a coordinated fashion.

Consolidated planning also brings stakeholders to the table to match needs and resources. **Consolidated planning serves as a catalyst for collaboration among educators.**

In the past, few schools, districts, and state education agencies discussed ways in which categorical programs could work together for the achievement of common goals. This lack of coordination was exacerbated by federal requirements for separate applications, program implementation strategies, evaluations, reporting mechanisms, and monitoring of all programs, even those funded to serve the same children. Program coordinators rarely explored how their programs could complement each other, and administrative functions were typically organized around programs and funding streams.

The 1994 *Improving America's Schools Act (IASA)*, which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, encouraged state and local planning that integrates and focuses federal, state, and local programs to improve teaching and learning in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion. Such consolidation allows flexibility and innovation for districts to implement school improvement efforts. Schools, districts, and states across the country are aligning programs with federal requirements by developing a vision and a mission, assessing needs, setting goals, and identifying ways to use resources to reach their goals. Today, categorical services are being replaced by coordinated services designed to improve the learning of all students, while ensuring that students with special needs get the support they need to reach high standards. The alignment and integration of programs and resources to meet specific student learning goals can be achieved through state and local consolidated planning.

Consolidated planning helps districts

- Use resources to serve students more efficiently
- Reduce duplication and fragmentation in programming
- Identify children's learning needs and determine actions and strategies to address those needs
- Determine how all district resources will be used to enable all children to reach high standards
- Coordinate funds from several programs to meet an identified need

A consolidated plan is not

- A compilation of descriptions of various programs and resources available to a school, district, or state, otherwise known as a "pancake" application
    - A compilation of programs suggests that a school, district, or state is implementing programs that are administered and funded separately. Compilation entails simply requesting a plan from each program coordinator; it is not a focused school improvement effort. Consolidated planning helps all programs join forces to move students in the same direction, uses all resources to the best advantage, and eliminates overlap of services.
- A melting pot for all funds, resources, and programs
    - Although consolidated planning allows a single application to replace separate applications from each program, it does not allow commingling of funds from various federal programs. Districts may integrate funds, resources, and services, but they continue to be accountable for using federal funds for those children for whom the programs are funded.
- A comprehensive plan
    - Comprehensive planning involves developing a few broad goals as an umbrella for

all programs, activities, and strategies to operate in a coordinated fashion. Comprehensive plans require aligning programs and resources toward school or district improvement efforts, but they do not necessarily consolidate programs.

- A strategic plan
  - A strategic plan involves broad, long-range planning to accomplish identified goals. It describes the concentration of efforts, resources, and activities toward a single vision. The consolidation of programs and resources may be an outcome of strategic planning if a planning team has the authority over budgeting and staff accountability.

Local Consolidated Planning—Legislation

Title I, Part A, Section 1112 and *Title XIV, Part C, Section 14305* and *14307 (b)* of the *IASA* provide the legislative foundation for the coordination of programs, services, and resources at the district level. (These sections of the legislation are included in *Appendix A* of this module.) The legislation emphasizes

- The alignment of state and local improvement plans focused on clear and measurable goals for student achievement
- The reduction of administrative effort in submitting separate plans for each federal program
- The coordination and integration of education services
- Flexibility for a district to tailor programs and services to its needs

— A state education agency that has an approved consolidated state plan may require or encourage local education agencies to submit consolidated plans to apply for federal funds. State education agencies provide various types of assistance to districts developing consolidated plans, including application forms, guidance manuals, and staff who consult to ensure that district plans align with both federal and state mandates.

Goals of Local Consolidated Planning

- To increase student achievement by improving the district's use of federal, state, and local program dollars to provide services to children and increase teacher capacity
- To provide local districts with an effective process for ongoing, broad-based planning and shared decision making
- To involve all stakeholders in improving student learning

Resources & References

Schmoker, M. (1996). *Results: The Key to Continuous School Improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *Cross-Cutting Guidance for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

APPENDIX A

IASA, Title I, Part A, Section 1112

LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PLANS

(a) **Plans Required.**—

(1) **Subgrants.**—A local educational agency may receive a subgrant under this part for any fiscal year only if such agency has on file with the State educational agency a plan, approved by the State educational agency, that is coordinated with other programs under this Act, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and other Acts, as appropriate, as specified in Section 14306.

(2) **Consolidated Application.**—This plan may be submitted as part of a consolidated application under Section 14304.

(b) **Plan Provisions.**—Each local educational agency plan shall include—

(1) a description of additional high-quality student assessments, if any, other than the assessments described in the State plan under Section 1111, that the local educational agency and schools served under this part will use to—

(A) determine the success of children served under this part in meeting the State's student performance standards and provide information to teachers, parents, and students on the progress being made toward meeting the State student performance standards described in Section 1111(b)(1)(D)(ii);

(B) assist in diagnosis, teaching, and learning in the classroom in ways that best enable children served under this part to meet State standards and do well in the local curriculum; and

(C) determine what revisions are needed to projects under this part so that such children will meet the State's student performance standards;

(2) at the local educational agency's discretion, a description of any other indicators that will be used in addition to the assessments described in paragraph (1) for the uses described in such paragraph;

(3) a description of the strategy the local educational agency will use to provide professional development for teachers, and, where appropriate, pupil services personnel, administrators, parents and other staff, including local educational agency level staff in accordance with Section 1119;

(4) a description of how the local educational agency will coordinate and integrate services provided under this part with other educational services at the local educational agency or individual school level, such as—

(A) Even Start, Head Start, and other preschool programs, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs, vocational education programs, and school-to-work transition programs; and

(B) services for children with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, migratory children served under part C or who were formerly eligible for services under part C in the two-year period preceding the date of the enactment of the Improving America's School Act of 1994, neglected or delinquent youth and youth at risk of dropping out served under part D, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program;

(5) a description of the poverty criteria that will be used to select school attendance areas under Section 1113;

(6) a description of how teachers, in consultation with parents, administrators, and pupil services personnel, in targeted assistance schools under Section 1115, will identify the eligible children most in need of services under this part;

(7) a general description of the nature of the programs to be conducted by such agency's schools under Sections 1114 and 1115 and, where appropriate, educational services outside such schools for children living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children, for neglected and delinquent children in community day school programs, and for eligible homeless children;

(8) a description of how the local educational agency will ensure that migratory children and formerly migratory children who are eligible to receive services under this part are selected to receive such services on the same basis as other children who are selected to receive services under this part;

(9) where appropriate, a description of how the local educational agency will use funds under this part to support preschool programs for children, particularly children participating in a Head Start or Even Start program, which services may be provided directly by the local educational agency or through a subcontract with the local Head Start agency designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under Section 641 of the Head Start Act, agencies operating Even Start programs, or another comparable public early childhood development program.

(c) **Assurances.—**

(1) **In General.—**Each local educational agency plan shall provide assurances that the local educational agency will—

(A) inform eligible schools and parents of schoolwide project authority;

(B) provide technical assistance and support to schoolwide programs;

(C) work in consultation with schools as the schools develop the schools' plans pursuant to Section 1114 and assist schools as they implement such plans or undertake activities pursuant to Section 1115 so that each school can make adequate yearly progress toward meeting the State content standards and student performance standards;

(D) fulfill such agency's school improvement responsibilities under Section 1116, including taking corrective actions under Section 1116(c)(4);

(E) coordinate and collaborate, to the extent feasible and necessary as determined by the local educational agency, with other agencies providing services to children, youth, and families, including health and social services;

(F) provide services to eligible children attending private elementary and secondary schools in accordance with Section 1120, and timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials regarding such services;

(G) take into account the experience of model programs for the educationally disadvantaged, and the findings of relevant research indicating that services may be most effective if focused on students in the earliest grades at schools that receive funds under this part; and

(H) beginning in fiscal year 1997 and in the case that a local educational agency chooses to use funds under this part to provide early childhood development services to low-income children below the age of compulsory school attendance, ensure that such services comply with the performance standards established under Section 641A(a) of the Head Start Act or under section 651 of such Act, as such Section 651 was in effect on the day preceding the date of enactment of the Human Services Amendments of 1994.

(2) **Special Rule.**—In carrying out subparagraph (H) of paragraph (1) the Secretary—

(A) in fiscal year 1995, shall consult with the Secretary of Health and Human Services on the implementation of such subparagraph and shall establish procedures (taking into consideration existing State and local laws, and local teacher contracts) to assist local educational agencies to comply with such subparagraph; and

(B) in fiscal year 1996, shall disseminate to local educational agencies the Head Start Performance Standards revised pursuant to section 641A(a) of the Head Start Act, and such agencies effected by such subparagraph shall plan for the implementation of such subparagraph (taking into consideration existing State and local laws, and local teacher contracts), including pursuing the availability of other Federal, State, and local funding sources to assist in compliance with such subparagraph.

(3) **Inapplicability.**—The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to preschool programs using the Even Start model or to Even Start programs which are expanded through the use of funds under this part.

(d) **Plan Development and Duration.**—Each local educational agency plan shall—

(1) be developed in consultation with teachers, including vocational teachers, and pupil services personnel, where appropriate, and parents of children in schools served under this part; and

(A) remain in effect for the duration of the local educational agency's participation under this part; and

(B) periodically be reviewed and revised, as necessary, to reflect changes in the local educational agency's strategies and programs.

(e) **State Approval.**—

(1) **In General.**—Each local educational agency plan shall be filed according to a schedule established by the State

educational agency, except that a local educational agency shall have not more than one year after the date of enactment of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 to have such plan provisionally approved by the State educational agency and not more than two years after the date of enactment of such Act to have such plan finally approved by the State educational agency.

(2) **Approval.**—The State educational agency shall approve a local educational agency's plan only if the State educational agency determines that the local educational agency's plan will enable schools served under this part to substantially help all children served under this part meet the standards expected of all children described in Section 1111(b)(1).

(3) **Review.**—The State educational agency shall review the local educational agency's plan to determine if such agency's professional development activities are in accordance with Section 1119.

(f) **Program Responsibility.**—The local educational agency plan shall reflect the shared responsibility of schools, teachers, and the local educational agency in making decisions regarding activities under Sections 1114 and 1115.

APPENDIX B

IASA, Title XIV, Part C—Section 14305

CONSOLIDATED LOCAL PLANS OR APPLICATIONS.

(a) **General Authority.**—A local educational agency receiving funds under more than one covered program may submit plans or applications to the State educational agency under such programs on a consolidated basis.

(b) **Required Consolidated Plans or Applications.**—A State educational agency that has submitted and had approved a consolidated State plan or application under section 14302 may require local educational agencies in the State receiving funds under more than one program included in the consolidated State plan or consolidated State application to submit consolidated local plans or applications under such programs.

(c) **Collaboration.**—A State educational agency shall collaborate with local educational agencies in the State in establishing procedures for the submission of the consolidated State plans or consolidated State applications under this section.

(d) **Necessary Materials.**—The State educational agency shall require only descriptions, information, assurances, and other materials that are absolutely necessary for the consideration of the local educational agency plan or application.

APPENDIX C

IASA, Title XIV, Part C—Section 14307 (b)

RELATIONSHIP OF STATE AND LOCAL PLANS TO PLANS UNDER THE GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT.

(b) **Local Plans.—**

(1) **In General.—**Each local educational agency plan submitted under the following programs shall be integrated with each other and its local improvement plan, if any, either approved or being developed, under Title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act:

- (A) Part A of Title I (helping disadvantaged children meet high standards).
- (B) Title II (professional development).
- (C) Title IV (safe and drug-free schools).
- (D) Subpart 4 of part A of Title IX (Indian education).
- (E) Subpart 1 of part A of title VII (bilingual education).
- (F) Title VI (innovative education program strategies).
- (G) Part C of Title VII (emergency immigrant education).

(2) **Plan of Operation.—**Each plan of operation included in an application submitted by an eligible entity under part B of Title I (Even Start) shall be consistent with, and promote the goals of, the State and local improvement plans, either approved or being developed, under title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act or, if those plans are not approved or being developed, with the State and local plans under Sections 1111 and 1112.

(3) **Special Rule.—**Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, if a requirement relating to a local plan referred to in paragraph (1) is already satisfied by the local educational agency's approved local improvement plan under Title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the local plan referred to in paragraph (1) need not separately address that requirement.

(4) **Submission.—**Any local plan referred to in paragraph (1) may, if necessary, be submitted as an amendment to the local educational agency's improvement plan under Title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

NOTES

MODULE ONE

1

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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MODULE TWO

MAKING *Education* MATTER

A Systematic Ap[illegible]

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About Module Two

Module Two describes a step-by-step process for developing a planning team.

Step One: Recruit and select planning team members.

Step Two: Define the work of the planning team.

Step Three: Review information on effective teamwork.

Step Four: Establish effective operating procedures.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to the work of planning teams. The module goes on to provide information that reflects current research on team building and establishing operational procedures.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While the worksheets may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness for *Module Three.*

Establishing the Team

"You know, I was pretty upset when we began talking about giving more money and resources to the schools with the worst students," Randall Cohen said to fellow planning team member Mark Donavan in the parking lot after the meeting. "I mean, it just didn't make sense to me to reward schools and students for bad performance."

Randall, vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce, and Mark, a doctor, represented business and community interests on the planning team. Their children attended Montgomery Middle School, situated in an affluent area of the city. A well-kept secret in many ways, Montgomery was the highest-performing middle school in the district and seemed to attract the best teachers and most resources.

"In fact, at the beginning of the meeting, I was determined to stick up for Montgomery's best interests," Randall continued. "I have to admit, I'd gotten a good pep talk from some of the parents at the school.

"Looking back on the meeting, I probably said some things that I shouldn't have. I thought we were going to just vote on how much money to spend at each school, and I was ready to fight. But the meeting went in a different direction from what I expected. Everyone actually listened to me, even though I think I said some unpopular things. Give me a break! I want what's best for my kids!"

"We all do," agreed Mark. "But we're a community, and we should want what's best for all our kids."

"Well, I've come around," Randall admitted. "I mean, after I said my piece, I began to listen to everyone else. And I realized that we weren't talking about getting less for the Montgomery kids, but getting more for the kids in the poorer schools. That is, not bringing the well-performing kids down, but lifting the lower-performing kids up. And I finally understood that resources were not the issue. That we're talking about pots of money that are targeted for kids with the greatest needs anyway.

"The real kick in the pants for me was when we reviewed the vision and mission for education in the district, and we remembered that we were talking about all the kids in the district, no matter where they come from or what their abilities are. I suddenly realized that I wasn't standing up for kids just at Montgomery, but I was representing the kids in the whole district.

"I really appreciate the folks on the team putting up with me and giving me the chance to see things a different way. It meant a lot to me that several of them said they understood my concerns even after I agreed to the plan to reallocate district resources."

"Well," said Mark, "that's how a good team works. You have to get the ideas out there and weigh them against where the work needs to go. It's generally, in my experience, a pretty messy process, but if people are patient and respect one another, you get there."

"Yeah, I feel good about what happened tonight. And I'm looking forward to coming up with some ways to move the whole district ahead. It's a good group. See you in two weeks."

In this module, district leaders will

- Learn how to select members of the planning team
- Prepare the team for the task of developing a district consolidated plan

The planning team will

- Learn about consolidated planning
- Get to know one another
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in developing a district consolidated plan
- Review features of and procedures for effective team work
- Set ground rules for operating as a team

Expected Outcomes

- A planning team will be established to develop the consolidated plan.
- Team members will agree on procedures for effective teamwork.

Basic Premises

- One of teamwork's greatest benefits is the richness that results from the pooling of knowledge, talents, and skills (TEAM—Together Everyone Achieves More).
- A team has common goals and shared leadership.
- Effective teamwork is fostered through open communication and clear definition of roles and responsibilities among the partners.
- Effective decision making creates win-win outcomes.
- The team is sustained through systematic meeting, planning, and information processing.

The Need for Collaboration

Title XIV of the 1994 *Improving America Schools Act (IASA)* provides an expectation and opportunity for collaboration. States, districts, and schools work together to identify needs and use program resources to address these needs in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. *Title XIV, Part C, Section 14301* states

> It is the purpose of this part to improve teaching and learning by encouraging greater cross-program coordination, planning, and service delivery under this Act with educational activities carried out with state and local funds.

Title I of the *IASA* also calls for collaboration, both within the school system and between the school district and the community:

> Each local education agency plan shall be developed in consultation with teachers, including vocational teachers, and pupil services personnel, where appropriate, and parents of children in schools served under this part. [*IASA, Title I, Part A, Section 1112 (b) (6)*]

> Each local education agency shall provide assurances that the local education agency will coordinate and collaborate to the extent feasible and necessary as determined by the local education agency, with other agencies providing services to children, youth, and families, including health and social services. [*IASA, Title I, Part A, Section 1112 (c) (1) (e)*]

To consolidate resources effectively, members of the school district and community need to communicate, cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate. These activities, which are facilitated by a planning team, are the cornerstones for consolidation. The activities are briefly described below.

Communication is a necessary component of the collaborative process. Continually sharing information with and inviting input from all team members and stakeholders ensures maximum buy-in and support for decisions.

Cooperation occurs through communication. Cooperation is a short-term, informal way for individuals or organizations to work together and share resources without losing their autonomy or changing the way they work. Individuals or organizations that cooperate on a project identify separate tasks that each agrees to accomplish.

Coordination requires both communication and cooperation. Coordination denotes a more complex involvement of individuals or organizations. It often requires a committee composed of representatives from each organization to identify, arrange, and assign tasks toward accomplishing a specific project or goal.

Collaboration involves a group of individuals or organizations in working together to achieve a common goal that cannot be achieved by one individual or group working alone. Each group provides resources and expertise, and all collaborators operate as a team to reach the goal. Collaboration requires a high degree of communication, cooperation, and coordination, as team members seek a fine balance between representing the interests of their respective organizations and working toward the common goal.

Teamwork: Collaboration in Action

Collaboration is essential in developing a district consolidated plan. Consolidated planning requires a high level of involvement from educators, families, and community members to create a working team. The collaborative process results in ownership of the plan by all stakeholders, win-win outcomes, and a shared, long-term commitment to achieving common goals.

Step One

Recruit and Select Planning Team Members

The purpose of the district planning team is to develop a plan that consolidates programs and resources to improve student learning. Team members should represent all stakeholders who share a long-term commitment to improving education. The **Suggested Team Member Criteria** will assist district leaders in identifying individuals who can most effectively serve on the consolidated planning team.

Suggested Team Member Criteria

- Actively participates in or represents at least one stakeholder group that has a primary interest in quality education and improving student achievement
- Has a strong interest in improving education
- Is knowledgeable about education and familiar with school district issues

- Uniquely represents a segment of the school community by profession, position, relationship to the schools, race, ethnicity, neighborhood, or other
- Is able to commit time and energy to the work of the team
- Acknowledges and accepts the commitment required of planning team members
- Has skills that will contribute to the planning process

(Note: Worksheets are included in *Appendix A*.) Answering the questions on **Worksheet 1—Team Member Selection Process** will help district leaders establish a procedure for forming the team.

The team should include a balance of educators, administrators, community members, service agency representatives, business representatives, students (if possible), and parents. The team should include at least two parents. Parents may feel more confident in speaking up and contributing to the team if at least one other parent is present. The team may want to include more than one student for the same reason.

The size of the team will vary according to the size of the district. A planning team in a district with eight schools will be smaller than that in a district with 60 schools. The size will also depend on how the team operates. Some teams have a small core group that identifies and assigns tasks to subcommittees. Other teams carry out the major planning tasks themselves. The team size needs to be small enough to approach planning in a unified and focused manner, yet large enough to make sure that a range of diverse perspectives are represented.

Worksheet 2—Team Membership, in *Appendix A*, will assist district leaders in ensuring that all critical stakeholders are represented on the planning team.

Step Two

Define the Work of the Planning Team

District leaders should ensure that prospective planning team members understand the following:

Education Stakeholder—an individual or organization with a vital interest in the successful education of young people.

The process of consolidated planning brings all stakeholders together to decide what needs to be done to improve student learning and what resources will be necessary to meet these needs. The planning team has primary responsibilities for

- Developing a plan that meets the educational needs of students to the greatest extent possible
- Receiving input from and involving school and district staff, parents, students, service agencies, and business and community representatives
- Planning efficient use of all available resources to address identified needs
- Determining how the plan will consolidate and/or coordinate federal, state, and local programs and resources
- Preparing and submitting the plan to the state department of education or U.S. Department of Education
- Guiding the implementation of the plan, evaluating the overall effectiveness of programs and strategies, and revising the plan when necessary
- Continually communicating with all stakeholders to get their feedback and support as the plan is implemented—that is, keeping the plan alive

Tip: District leaders should ensure that planning team members understand their roles and responsibilities and the expected

outcomes of their work prior to beginning work on the plan. This will help obtain their commitment and alleviate concerns about the time and effort required.

Step Three

Review Information on Effective Team Work

Principles of Effective Teamwork

Once the planning team is selected, district leaders and team members should review and discuss effective team work. The following principles will help district planning teams develop strategies for involving everyone in the process:

- **All team members share responsibility for team performance—** If the team fails, it is the fault of the individuals and the team. If the team succeeds and reaches its goals, everybody takes credit.
- **Decisions should always be agreed upon by the team** — Decisions are not made by the team leader, an individual, or any clique. All important policies should be decided upon by the team as a group.
- **Activities allow for maximum participation of all team members** — Team members should have equal opportunities to participate. The team leader should encourage less vocal or reluctant team members to express their ideas. Establishing subcommittees for certain tasks helps to ensure full participation across the team.
- **Rules, agenda, and procedures are flexible—** The team should establish operating procedures but be willing to modify them when necessary. Tasks and strategies will change as the skills, needs, and interests of the team change.
- **Team members contribute ideas in a risk-free and non-judgmental environment**—Team members need to become acquainted and enjoy working with each other by using informal procedures, minimizing rules, separating members of cliques or friendship circles, and minimizing perceptions of professional or social status. All members should feel their input is respected and valued.
- **Team progress is continually evaluated—** Teams should assess the effectiveness of their operating procedures and their progress toward meeting goals with evaluation sheets, process reports, subcommittee discussions, suggestion boxes, etc. Evaluation should be done often and thoughtfully. Results should be shared and discussed with the whole team.
- **Team members understand the importance of their roles**—The team should identify specific roles for team members. Each team member should feel that his or her role is integral to the progress of the team.
- **The team can take action.**
- **Team members' sense of responsibility for the team builds as the team develops**—The team should have the authority to accomplish its tasks. All team members should be allowed to use their expertise and talents.
- **The team should continually review its goals, and each team member should be committed to achieving the goals.** The team should provide opportunities for members to discuss issues of concern or barriers to their commitment.

Strategies for Conflict Resolution

Disagreements inevitably arise when individuals work closely together. Differences must be resolved for work to progress. Unresolved conflicts hinder constructive communication and productivity.

Conflict may result from

- Professional differences among team members
- Personal differences among team members

- Behaviors that make some members feel left out of discussions
- Cultural differences
- Conflicting goals

When conflicts arise, the team leader must be prepared to help members resolve their disagreements. Teams can use several strategies to resolve conflicts.

- Allow resistance to come out in an open, accepting way. Encourage team members to use good listening skills.
- Look for common ground by identifying similarities of values and perceptions among team members and being respectful of all differences.
- Ask questions to achieve clarity.
- Acknowledge and respect others' feelings.
- Restate the problem and the identified differences to make sure the problem and differences are being perceived by all sides in the same way.
- Break the problem down into specific issues. Attempt to build consensus one issue at a time.
- Refocus everyone on the identified goals.

Strategies for Decision Making

The planning team must consider and agree upon methods for making decisions. Some methods are more effective than others. Generally, decisions that get the most support are ones that have the most input from team members and result from efforts to reach consensus. However, the team must consider such factors as urgency, expertise, and time when selecting decision-making strategies. A frequently used example is that consensus reaching would not be an appropriate strategy for deciding the best way to exit a burning building.

Tools help groups look at issues from all perspectives and help them make informed choices. When group decision making is the best strategy, the following methods are useful.

Consensus Reaching

By far the most effective decision-making strategy is consensus because it requires that everyone involved must agree that the decision is appropriate, and agree to support it. Consensus means that the decision may not be everyone's top choice, but it is one that everyone can live with.

Steps to Reaching Consensus

1. Discuss the issue or problem, presenting data and raising questions and concerns.
2. Decide if consensus is the appropriate path to resolution by considering the importance of the issue, the time necessary to reach consensus, and alternatives if consensus is not reached.
3. Brainstorm to generate solutions.
4. Evaluate alternative solutions by exploring similarities and differences among proposed solutions, agreements, and disagreements among team members.
5. Choose the most appropriate alternative.
6. Poll each team member to ensure that each person will support the decision.

Consensus means that every team member understands, can live with, and will publicly support the final decision. The opinions of those not in total agreement should be considered, and, if possible, the group should move toward the solution that is most inclusive of every opinion. If the group does not progress toward consensus and if timing is not critical, the team leader may recommend that the decision be postponed. The group may need time to "cool off," gather new information, or invite new perspectives on the issue. If timing is critical, the team leader should encourage the group to select another decision-making strategy.

Worksheet 3—Checklist for Effective Decisions may assist teams in evaluating the decisions they make. It can be used with **Worksheet 5—Checklist for Effective Teamwork** to evaluate a meeting that included decision-making activities. The team leader should encourage discussion on the information provided so team members can celebrate areas of effectiveness and discuss areas for improvement.

Tools for Making Group Decisions

Think-Pair-Share

This tool helps a group elicit, share, and summarize responses to an issue.

1. Leader poses a question or activity.
2. Team members **THINK** (and usually write) a response or work on the activity individually for a given period of time.
3. Team Members **PAIR** (or triple) with partner(s) to discuss the question of the activity and reach agreement.
4. Partners **SHARE** their agreed-upon answers or responses with the whole team.

Fist-to-Five

This tool helps to assess how close the group is to consensus. Participants do the following in response to a question:

Make a **FIST** to indicate a negative response.

Show **THREE FINGERS** to indicate a question or neutral response.

Show **FIVE FINGERS** to indicate a positive response.

Jigsaw

This tool helps to examine an issue and share findings with the whole group.

1. Form groups of three to four.
2. Assign each group member a portion of the task to examine the issue.
3. Each person studies and prepares his/her portion of the task.
4. Each person reports his/her portion of the task to the other group members.

Dotting

This tool polls group priorities.

1. List each option on chart paper or separate file cards.
2. Give each participant a limited number of sticker "dots."
3. Have participants place their dots next to their highest priorities or preferences.

Dotting Hints and Variations

- Schedule the "dotting" during a natural break so people don't have to crowd around the chart at the same time.
- If the group is very large, post extra copies of the options chart in different parts of the room and add the results from all the charts together.
- Give different colors or shapes of stickers to participants who represent different roles (e.g., parents, teachers).
- Give each participant the option of using one red sticker to place by an option that he or she wants to eliminate.

Adapted from: Patterson, J.L. (1993). *Leadership for tomorrow's schools.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD, pp. 97-101.

Step 4

Establish Effective Operating Procedures

Getting Started

From the outset, team members need to establish a level of familiarity, comfort, and trust. A newly-formed team will need time to get acquainted and develop mutual respect. Get-acquainted activities make it fun for team members to discover one another's skills and interests, and these activities establish an atmosphere of warmth and openness.

> **Tip: The better the team members know each other, the less time is needed for "warm-up."**

A good warm-up activity gives everyone on the team an opportunity to speak and interact with other team members and gets everyone out of their seats and moving around. Warm-up activities provide equal opportunities for participation and should not put any team member on the spot. Two sample warm-up activities are included in *Appendix B* of this module.

A warm-up activity at the beginning of a meeting is generally productive, even when the team has been working together for a while. Established teams need to gain focus. A brief sharing time (*share something that has happened in your life since we were last together*), followed by an update from subcommittees and a review of the minutes from the last meeting get the team reconnected and ready to address agenda items.

Setting Ground Rules

Teams can better control discussion times, decision-making procedures, and other work by setting ground rules. **Worksheet 4—Setting Ground Rules** may serve both as a basis for discussion at the first meeting of the planning team and as a record of the agreed-upon rules. After this worksheet is completed, the team leader should provide a copy to each team member. The team leader should emphasize that ground rules may be renegotiated at any time as the team's needs and operations change.

> **Tip: Teams should establish ground rules for absenteeism and lack of participation (apathy).**

Conducting Effective Meetings

Because the team will need to work when it meets, members will need to plan carefully so that everyone's time is used productively. Essential components of effective meetings include

- **An agenda**—helps to focus the meeting and provides a time frame
- **A warm-up, get-acquainted, or reconnect activity**—brings team members to common ground and reduces anxiety
- **Identified roles for participants**—forces involvement and responsibility for the meeting
- **Ground rules**—maintains control and consistency of operations
- **Evaluation of the meeting**—provides closure and identifies areas for improvement and celebration

Developing a Meeting Agenda

An agenda articulates a purpose and establishes the flow of a meeting. When an agenda is shared before a meeting, participants know what to expect and how to prepare.

The agenda is the road map for accomplishing meeting goals. Nelson and Economy (1995) believe that the agenda keeps a meeting on track; that is, the agenda can help rein in a discussion that wanders off topic and can help ensure that critical topics are not forgotten. In addition, the agenda establishes a time frame in which the meeting goals must be accomplished.

A simple form, such as **Worksheet 5—Agenda Form**, enables participants to prepare when they

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receive it ahead of time and to address all critical issues during the meeting.

Points to Keep in Mind When Planning an Agenda

- **Starting and ending time**—Meetings should always start and end on time. This policy shows respect to team members who take time out of their busy schedules to serve. In general, unless a meeting includes a special event, it should not last beyond two hours.
- **Goals**—Every meeting should have concrete goals so that team members have a target and feel a sense of accomplishment when the goals are achieved.
- **Preparation**—When team members receive an agenda before a meeting, they should know what they need to read or do in advance and/or what they need to bring. If reading material is provided, it should be short and clearly related to the meeting goals.
- **Introduction**—The beginning of a meeting is a critical time for the group to get reacquainted and refocused. The leader may use a brief warm-up activity and then review progress from the previous meeting.
- **Agenda Items**—Agenda items should be limited to what the group can realistically accomplish during the scheduled time. The items should clearly relate to the goals. The discussion of each item should take place within the allotted time frame unless the whole group decides to alter the time. Regarding the ordering of agenda items, Doyle and Strauss (1976) explain:

  > In general, we favor putting reports on action items first and then dealing with issues in order of urgency and general concern. If you don't get to cover all the items, then at least you have taken care of the most critical ones. (p. 209)

- **Closure**—The end of the meeting provides an opportunity to review what was accomplished and to celebrate the goals achieved. The leader may want to review decisions and tasks assigned. The group should suggest agenda items for the next meeting and set the date, time, and location. The leader should conduct an evaluation of the meeting so that the group can discuss what worked well and what needs improvement.

Establishing Roles

Having specific roles keeps team members involved and allows the meeting to run more smoothly.

- **Team Leader**—The team leader's job is to move the meeting along, especially when conflict occurs or the group gets bogged down on a particular issue. The team leader must remain unbiased and think quickly to select appropriate group facilitation strategies.

  Meeting facilitation can be a shared responsibility, and a rotating one, if the team chooses. The team may select a leader to serve for a designated period of time, according to its needs and the leadership skills of the team members. Selecting a team leader for an extended period of time provides focus and consistency to the team; selecting a leader for a shorter time provides opportunities for other team members to utilize their leadership qualities, for teams to be rejuvenated by fresh leadership, and for weak or overburdened leaders to move to other roles on the team.

- **Meeting Coordinator**—The meeting coordinator arranges meeting locations, refreshments, and equipment; sends reminders for upcoming meeting dates; collects and shares correspondence and serves as the point person for communication.
- **Recorder**—A recorder is necessary, and a backup recorder is often helpful, particularly

when teams are involved in a complex discussion. The recorder takes notes at each meeting and provides copies to all members. The recorder also keeps a record of all minutes, decisions, and documents provided at the meetings.

- **Time keeper**—A time keeper helps to keep the team on task and ensure that the meeting begins and ends on time.

Evaluating the Meeting

Tip: If you choose to rotate roles, do it at the end of the meeting so that team members know what will be expected of them at the next meeting.

Evaluation provides a summary of the work the team accomplished during their time together. It also sets up expectations for the next meeting.

The evaluation may have team members complete the checklists in this module, conduct an informal discussion of what went well and what could be improved, or write individual observations at the end of a meeting.

Evaluation not only celebrates the work of the team, but also brings difficulties to the table. This process provides closure to the meeting and can be a mechanism to ensure the continuous improvement of the planning process.

Worksheet 6—Checklist for Effective Teamwork may help teams to evaluate their meetings. At the end of a meeting, team members should complete **Worksheet 5**. The team leader should encourage discussion of the completed checklists to celebrate meeting effectiveness and identify ways to improve the next meeting. **Worksheet 5** may be used in conjunction with **Worksheet 3—Checklist for Effective Decisions**.

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Providing Information After the Meeting

The recorder should provide meeting notes to all team members as soon as possible. The notes should include a list of all in attendance, key decisions, tasks assigned, and purpose and agenda items for the next meeting. The notes should announce the date, time, and location of the next meeting. Team members should be invited to respond with corrections or clarifications.

Meeting information should also be provided to district staff and key stakeholders. The team may share these communication tasks among the members.

What Do District Leaders Do First to Get the Team Going?

Once the team is selected, district leaders may want to conduct the following activities during the first meetings:

- Conduct a warm-up activity, then allow members to introduce themselves and discuss their stake in the planning process and skills they can contribute. This activity should be informal and social.
- Explain the purpose of the team and explain the concept and benefits of district consolidated planning. Team members should read and discuss *Module One*.
- Provide state- and district-specific information on the consolidated planning process, including a list of programs to be consolidated, the application form, and deadline for submission.
- Discuss the roles and responsibilities of team members and time commitment required.
- Review features of and procedures for effective teamwork in *Module Two*.
- Discuss setting ground rules for team operation and complete **Worksheet 5** as a group.

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- Help the group select a team leader, meeting coordinator, and recorder.
- Identify first tasks and agenda items for the next meeting; set the date, time, and location for the next meeting.
- Provide contact information on team members and key district staff for each member.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After the district leaders and team members have read *Module Two: Establishing the Team* and conducted the suggested activities for team selection and team building, they should review their efforts using to the following checklist.

_____ 1. District leaders have selected team members with a variety of backgrounds, skills, and interests in education.

_____ 2. Selected team members have agreed to serve on the district consolidation planning team.

_____ 3. Team members understand the concept and benefits of consolidated planning (information provided in *Module One*).

_____ 4. Team members know which programs are to be consolidated and the due date for submitting the consolidated plan application.

_____ 5. Team members have discussed their roles and responsibilities and time commitment required.

_____ 6. Team members have begun to know, respect, and trust one another.

_____ 7. The team has reviewed features of effective teamwork, decision making, and meetings provided in *Module Two.*

_____ 8. The team has established ground rules for operation, and these have been recorded and provided to each member.

_____ 9. The team has selected a leader, meeting coordinator, and recorder.

_____ 10. Each team member has contact information for other team members and key district staff.

_____ 11. The team has set the date, time, location, and purpose for the next meeting.

If all items on the list are checked, the team should proceed to activities in *Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements.*

References & Resources

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Establishing the Team

Worksheet 1—Team Member Selection Process

1. What criteria will be used to select team members?

2. What are the steps in the selection process?

3. Who will be involved in selecting team members?

4. How will prospective team members be invited to join?

Tip: Some team members will be part of more than one stakeholder group. For example, a teacher may also be a parent and a community leader. Avoid having team members officially represent more than one group, as it causes them to have more than one focus and renders their representation less effective.

Establishing the Team

Worksheet 2—Team Membership

Stakeholder Group	Team Member	Position / Office
School District Administrators		
Principals		
Teachers		
Parents		
Students		
Community Leaders		
Business Leaders		
Agency Representatives		
Others		

Tip: Make sure that coordinators of the programs that will be consolidated serve on the planning team.

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Worksheet 3—Checklist for Effective Decisions

___ 1. The ideas and talents of the members were well used in arriving at decisions because everyone had an opportunity to provide their perspectives.

___ 2. The time spent arriving at decisions was devoted to reviewing pertinent data and discussing issues in an analytical, comprehensive, and objective way.

___ 3. The team made decisions that reflect the needs of all stakeholders.

___ 4. The team members are committed to the decisions and agree to take action to ensure that decisions are implemented.

___ 5. The decisions moved the team toward reaching its goals.

___ 6. The decision-making ability of the team is improved. The decision-making process was a learning experience for the team.

Worksheet 4—Setting Ground Rules

1. Where, when, and how often will the team meet?

2. How will team members share responsibility for organizing and leading the meetings?

3. Who will prepare the agenda, and how will agenda items be identified?

4. What rules will guide team discussions?

5. What strategies will the team use to make decisions? What circumstances will determine which strategy is selected?

6. What can team members do to ensure that decisions are made by the group and not behind the scenes?

7. How will the team resolve problems or conflicts?

8. How will the team address absenteeism or apathy?

9. Who will handle logistical arrangements for meetings?

10. Under what circumstances will a third party facilitator be involved?

Adapted from Melaville, Blank, & Asayesh, 1993

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Establishing the Team

Worksheet 5—Agenda Form

Name of Group:

Meeting Date:

Start Time: End Time:

Location:

Meeting Goals:

Preparation:

Agenda Items

Time	Topic	Leader
	Introduction	
	Item 1:	
	Item 2:	
	Item 3:	
	Item 4:	
	Item 5:	
	Closure:	

Worksheet 6—Checklist for Effective Teamwork.

___ 1. The team was clear on the purpose of the meeting and stayed focused on its goals.

___ 2. The meeting began and ended on time.

___ 3. The team demonstrated a sense of group commitment.

___ 4. Mutual trust and respect was evident among team members.

___ 5. Team members followed the ground rules.

___ 6. The team encouraged open communication and expressed diverse perspectives.

___ 7. The team used effective decision-making techniques (see **Worksheet 3**).

___ 8. Team members' roles, responsibilities, and assignments were clear.

___ 9. Team members agreed upon a time line for work, and individual team members agreed to complete tasks on time.

APPENDIX B

Warm-Up Activities for Establishing the Team

Warm Up Activity 1—Something in Common

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Number of People: Unlimited

Materials/Preparation: None

To Begin:

- Tell participants to look for someone in the room they do not know and pair up with that person. Participants should introduce themselves to each other.
- Instruct participants to find one personal thing they have in common with their partners. Work, school, and attendance at the training do not count.
- Allow two minutes for partners to talk.
- At the end of two minutes, ask for volunteers to share with the group what they found in common with their partners.
- Tell the partners to find another set of partners and form a group of four. They should then introduce themselves to one another.
- Instruct the groups of four to find one personal thing they all have in common.
- Allow four minutes for the groups of four to talk.
- At the end of four minutes, ask for volunteers to share the thing they all have in common.
- Depending on the size of the group, this activity can be continued to groups of eight and sixteen.

Wrap up this activity by asking participants what was accomplished during this time. (They met others in the group, had an opportunity to share, moved around, learned how similar they are in some ways, etc.)

Establishing the Team

Warm-Up Activity 2—Two and Counting

Time: 10-15 minutes

Number of People: Unlimited

Materials/Preparation: None

To Begin:

- Divide the participants into small groups.
- Instruct group members to introduce themselves to one another.
- Tell participants to count the number of anatomical feet they have in their homes (four for a dog, two for a person, two for a bird, etc.) and to share something about those feet (who they belong to, etc.).
- After each group member has shared, tell groups to total the number of anatomical feet represented in their group.
- Ask each group to share their total and post on newsprint or chalkboard.
- Recognize the group with the largest total.

Wrap up this activity by asking for volunteers to share what they learned about other group members.

(Get Acquainted Activities from *Warm Ups and Wind Downs*, Educational Media, 1993.)

NOTES

MODULE TWO

2

Region IV
Comprehensive

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE THREE

MAKING

[illegible]

MATTER

A Systematic Approach

to Developing the [illegible]

Consolidated Plan

3 CREATING VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

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MAKING Resources MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

3 CREATING VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE THREE

Making Resources Matter

Published by

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MODULE THREE

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About Module Three

Module Three describes a step-by-step process for developing or reviewing the vision for education in the district and the mission of the school system.

Step One: Dream.

Step Two: Draft the vision statement.

Step Three: Align the vision.

Step Four: Develop a mission statement.

Step Five: Share the vision and mission.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to developing the vision and mission for the district school system. The module goes on to provide information that reflects current research on establishing the vision and mission and using them to focus district efforts.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While the worksheets may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness for *Module Four*.

Creating Vision & Mission Statements

At the first meeting of a planning team in a small rural district in Tennessee, the main item on the agenda was to develop a vision for education. Amidst some grumbling, several people suggested that they get on with real planning and skip the "touchy-feely stuff." One member commented, "We already have a vision statement that we wrote for our last district plan." She read, "'We want our children to be productive, successful citizens who can meet the challenges of living in the fast-paced, technological world of the 21st century.' Can't we just go with that?" she asked. Another member agreed and noted that, since their time was limited, they needed to move along.

The team leader was reluctant to do this and asked the group just to have a discussion to confirm that the statement they heard really was their vision. The group approached the discussion from several perspectives. First, they discussed what they liked best about their community. Then, they discussed what they would like their community to look like in ten years. The conversation covered education's role in moving the community toward the ten-year vision. The group talked about the kinds of things they wanted the kids to know and be able to do as a result of their education.

The recorder listed thoughts on chart paper as they were generated. After 15 minutes, the team leader asked the group to read over their ideas and to make observations. A group member noted that one of the prevailing themes in the whole discussion was that children should not feel like they have to leave the community to be successful. Someone else agreed, "We have a really special community here with a history and culture of its own. We need to help our children appreciate that." A team member from the business sector noted, however, that there were not a lot of opportunities for kids after they finished school if they wanted to stay and make a good living. The most successful students had few places to apply their skills and, therefore, moved to other areas of the state after they finished college.

The discussion progressed to establishing a vision for education that included developing in the children an appreciation for their culture and a desire to strengthen the community. Children would be committed to learning skills that could improve the quality of life in their community. This, of course, aligned with a broader vision that the community would attract new businesses and be a place where the children could live and support themselves as adults. This vision for education was quite different from the earlier version.

As the meeting drew to a close, most of the team members admitted to being surprised at the ideas that were generated and felt that they had hit upon a vision that captured what was close to their hearts. One member said, "I feel like I have a real bond with everyone here. I think I know where we need to go with this plan."

In this module, team members will

- Learn the roles of the district vision for education and mission statements in the consolidated plan
- Recognize the components of effective vision and mission statements
- Develop a vision for education and a mission statement for the district or revise the current ones
- Identify ways to gain support for the vision and mission from stakeholders

Expected Outcome

A vision for education and a mission statement that can guide all district planning efforts will be developed.

Basic Premises

- The district vision encompasses stakeholders' future hopes and dreams for all students.
- The vision provides direction and focus for the consolidated plan, and the mission defines the roles and responsibilities of the school district in achieving the vision.
- The district vision should align with federal and state visions for all children and should complement the vision of each school in the district.
- Commitment to and excitement about the vision and mission are critical elements in planning implementation.

Purpose of the Vision

Vision *— An ideal and unique image of the future.*

Developing a vision for the district or reviewing and/or revising the existing vision is the critical starting point for consolidated planning and should remain at the forefront throughout the planning process. John Kotter (1996) discusses three important purposes of an organization's vision. Those purposes, adapted for the district consolidated planning process, follow.

- **A vision clarifies the general direction for change.** As a result, it simplifies and directs more detailed decisions. The appropriateness of possible decisions and activities is determined by how well they align with the vision.
- **A vision motivates people to take action in the right direction.** When people are asked to work with fewer resources and/or learn new skills and behaviors, they are forced out of their comfort zones. A strong vision helps people see that the end result will be worth the present discomfort.
- **A vision helps to quickly and efficiently coordinate the actions of different people.** Vision-based decisions minimize the need for debate. A vision guides individuals to make decisions that will move the organization in the right direction and ensures that activities in various parts of the organization are complementary and coordinated. (p. 68)

Characteristics of a Strong Vision

A good vision statement has a number of common characteristics. Working with these characteristics, the planning team can focus all stakeholders on a unified direction for school improvement.

Tip: The Alabama State Teacher Forum based their visioning discussions on idealized design theory, asking participants to keep the following elements of idealization in mind while envisioning their dream schools:

- Ideal does not equal impossible. The design of the school must be feasible and viable—capable of operating if it did come into existence.
- Idealization encourages creativity in design because it frees participants from self-imposed constraints. It invites ingenuity because it focuses on the ideal.
- The idealized design converts planning from a retrospective to a prospective orientation. It is proactive rather than reactive: most system redesign is reactive—busy identifying current system deficiencies. It is essential to stay focused upon the ideal; otherwise, discussions can easily degenerate into gripe sessions about current system failures. Proactive design moves toward what one wants—not away from what one does not want.

SERVE. (1998). *Designing the school of your dreams.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

- **It looks to the future.** It helps the district consider what is possible and desirable before concrete planning begins. The vision addresses a common future, one that is shared by all stakeholders.
- **It provides the ultimate standard against which all concrete effort is measured.** It is the ideal outcome of the consolidated plan, while the goals, objectives, and strategies are the real or concrete means for achieving that ideal.
- **It is positive and uplifting.** It creates a picture of a future in which others will want to participate. It inspires and motivates.
- **It belongs to its creators.** It reflects the beliefs and values of the community or team that developed it.
- **It focuses the work.** It provides direction for all the activities that are part of the development and implementation of the consolidated plan.
- **It pictures future accomplishments.** It is a statement of successful outcomes.

The Steps of Creating Vision & Mission Statements

Step One

Dream

Developing a vision is an opportunity to dream. The team should engage in discussions that focus on the lives they want for their children.

The vision should be grounded in real-world issues. The team should imagine the world of their children's future from the standpoints of economics, society, technology, family life, and other issues.

Worksheet 1—The World of the Future helps teams consider the skills people will need to be independent, well-adjusted, and productive citizens of the future. Team members should discuss the questions as a group. The ideas generated will help the group identify the beliefs and attitudes toward education of the individual members of the team. (Copies of all worksheets are included in *Appendix A.*)

Worksheet 2—Dreaming Schools will help the team move from the picture of the future they developed in **Worksheet 1** to imagining how schools and educators will respond to best meet the needs of students ten years from now.

The team leader should have the group work together or in pairs to address these questions. As team members dream, they should keep in mind the following points:

- A vision is based, in part, on past knowledge and experience in educating students. What is known about the strengths, weaknesses, successes, and failures of the school community, combined with the values and beliefs of the community, will shape the answers to these questions.
- A vision is also based on what is known about excellence in education. Research-based effective practices should guide the vision.
- Even though a vision needs a grounding in reality, the team needs to think big. Big dreams generate high expectations. The vision should be a target that beckons.

Individuals or teams may want to represent their ideas in pictures, charts, or mind maps to present them to the whole group.

Worksheet 3—Establishing the Vision will lead the team from their dreams for the future to setting goals that reflect their dreams. The group should discuss these questions and record all information on flip chart paper.

Step Two

Draft the Vision Statement

The information generated in **Worksheet 3** will serve as the content of the district's vision. A small subcommittee or appointed individual on the team should condense these ideas into a vision statement for the whole district. As drafts of the statement are developed, the writer(s) should keep in mind the following points:

- The vision statement should capture the spoken and unspoken hopes and dreams. "Your vision should inspire and touch you. If it does not inspire you, it will probably not inspire others. A vision comes from within and without." (Scott, Gaffe, Tobe, p. 76)
- The vision statement provides a clear picture of a condition that has not happened, but is based on a group's consensus on standards of excellence, values, and beliefs.
- "Effective visions are open-ended enough to allow for individual initiative and for changing conditions. Long and detailed pronouncements not only can feel like a straightjacket but can soon become obsolete in a rapidly changing world. At the same time, visions that need constant readjustments lose their credibility." (Kotter, p. 76)

The statements in **Worksheet 4—Vision Statement Checklist**, adapted from Scott, Jaffe, Tobe (p. 90), will assist teams in evaluating and refining their vision statements. Once the draft of the vision statement is complete, the team should use **Worksheet 4** to gauge its effectiveness and "power." If the team is unable to check most of the items, they should revise the vision statement. (This worksheet will also assist teams in reviewing an existing vision statement.)

Step Three

Align the Vision

Many districts already have vision statements that were developed by the district office, Board of Education, or prior planning teams. The consolidated planning team should compare its draft vision with any existing vision statement. The group should discuss how the new vision corresponds to the existing statement. The team may decide whether to use the existing one or whether to revise it according to the new ideas generated in their visioning process. If the team decides to revise the original vision statement, its developers should be part of this process.

Most school planning teams have developed visions for their schools. The district planning team should review these vision statements to ensure that they align with the district vision. In most cases, these statements will complement one another. If school faculty and staff feel that the district vision conflicts with their school's vision, the consolidated planning team should discuss ways that the school and district statements can be more closely aligned. **It is critical that schools support the district vision.**

Step Four

Develop a Mission Statement

The mission goes hand in hand with the vision. It describes the work the district will do to accomplish the vision. Just as the vision defines the focus and direction of the district plan, the mission defines the role of the district in accomplishing that vision.

A mission statement describes

- The work the district will do
- How the work will be done
- By whom the work will be done
- To what end the work will be done

The mission should

- Reflect the values and beliefs of stakeholders
- Describe the means by which the district will accomplish the vision
- Include a description of the evidence that will determine that the mission is fulfilled

Answering the questions in **Worksheet 5—Writing a Mission Statement** will help the planning team address key questions to develop a draft of the district mission statement.

Example of a mission statement

> The mission of the Hoke County School District, as a diversified community of lifelong learners, is to commit ourselves and others to challenge students to their full learning potentials; to develop each individual's mind, body, and heart; and to inspire students to become productive members of our global society, through an integrated instructional program.

The Hoke County mission statement is a rich compilation of the purpose, values, and vision of the school system that specifies what the role of the school system is and how the system will achieve its vision. The statement captures a diversity of thought and input and focuses it on a clear direction for the school system.

Step Five

Share the Vision and Mission

Communicating the district's vision and mission

- Strengthens the commitment to change
- Reaches and involves the greater community
- Gains additional support from the greater community
- Legitimizes the consolidated plan with stakeholder groups
- Focuses the work of the planning team and those implementing the plan
- Maintains the focus of the plan as it is implemented

The planning team should share completed drafts of the vision and mission statements with administrators, faculty, staff, parents, community members, and students. These stakeholders will assist the team in revising the vision and mission to accurately reflect the dreams and commitment of the *whole* community. The vision and mission then serve as rallying points for educational excellence. The vision and mission should be the foundation of all conversations and activities related to school improvement in the district.

School and community meetings, events, and activities can all be forums for sharing the vision and mission. Newspapers, bulletin boards, community access programs, and the hallways of public buildings are all places where these statements can be posted. The vision may be generated in a picture or design that becomes a logo to represent excellence in education. The logo may be used on any print materials generated by the consolidated planning team or related groups.

Most importantly, stakeholders and team members must walk the walk and talk the talk. They must be believers and share their excitement about the vision as they talk to others. They are on the front-line of communication, and the strength of the vision will be determined to a great extent by the strength of their belief in it. They set the example that others will follow.

Once the vision and mission have been approved by all stakeholders, everyone should keep in mind that the task is never finished. As changes occur in the schools and community, the team will need to revisit the vision and mission periodically to update them.

The team must have long-range plans for keeping the vision statement visible and real. Implementers of the district plan must be continually reminded of where they are going, so they will be less inclined to be discouraged or apathetic. The more visible and real the vision, the more successfully the consolidated plan will be implemented.

Organizing & Revising Checklist

After the district has adopted a vision and mission statement, the planning team should review it according to the following checklist.

____ 1. The vision and mission development (or review) process involved all planning team members in a series of consensus-reaching activities that focused on what's important for the children, what education in the district should look like in the future, and what role the district will play in accomplishing its vision for education.

____ 2. The vision aligns with the visions of schools in the district.

____ 3. The planning team shared the vision and mission statements in draft form with schools administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students, and the team used their input when revising the statements.

____ 4. The vision and mission statements are displayed publicly throughout the district.

____ 5. Team members and stakeholders support the vision and mission and are excited about the proposed direction for education in the district.

____ 6. Planning team members and stakeholders are committed to using the vision and mission to guide planning and decision making.

If all the items on the checklist are checked, the team should move on to *Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment.*

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Creating Vision & Mission Statements

Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Worksheet 1—The World of the Future

Imagine your community ten years from now.

1. What kinds of jobs will be available? What kinds of skills and knowledge will people need to be employable?

2. What kinds of skills and knowledge will people need in order to access information and use it to help them understand their world?

3. What will the community look like economically?

4. What demographic changes will have taken place?

5. What will be the top concerns of community leaders?

Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Worksheet 2—Dreaming Schools

Imagine the schools in the district ten years from now after successful reform initiatives have created an ideal educational system that meets the needs of all children and helps them achieve to high standards.

1. What will learning areas look like?

2. What will teachers be doing?

3. What will students be doing?

4. What will students be learning?

5. How will students be learning?

(continued)

6. If you could interview recent graduates, what would they say the school system did for them?

7. Suppose you could interview students who may have been traditionally viewed as at risk of failure. What would they say the school has done for them?

8. How do teachers interact with students?

9. How do teachers interact with other teachers?

10. How are parents and community members involved?

11. What do the schools do to address issues raised in Worksheet 1—The World of the Future?

12. How is education better than it was ten years ago?

Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Worksheet 3—Establishing the Vision

1. What are the community's hopes, dreams, and goals for its schools?

2. What are the commonalties among their hopes, dreams, and goals?
   Do they point in a particular direction?

3. Are there compelling reasons to pursue these hopes, dreams, and goals? What are they?

4. What changes are necessary to achieve these hopes, dreams, and goals?

5. What research and best practices support these changes?

6. What action is necessary to achieve these hopes, dreams, and goals?

7. Who will be involved in achieving these hopes, dreams, and goals?

Worksheet 4—Creating Vision & Mission Statements

Vision Statement Checklist

The vision statement

______ 1. Is written in plain language.

______ 2. Contains motivating, positive language.

______ 3. Includes all stakeholders.

______ 4. Will result in better education for all students.

______ 5. Will positively impact the school and larger community.

______ 6. Benefits all stakeholders.

______ 7. Presents where the district needs to go.

______ 8. Is easy to read and understand.

______ 9. Captures the organization's desired spirit.

______ 10. Is dynamically incomplete so people can fill in the pieces.

______ 11. Is meaningful enough to guide decision making.

______ 12. Gets people's attention.

______ 13. Describes a preferred and meaningful future status.

______ 14. Can be felt/experienced; gives people goosebumps.

______ 15. Gives people a better understanding of how their individual purpose could be realized in the group.

______ 16. Provides a motivating force, even in hard times.

______ 17. Is perceived as achievable.

______ 18. Is challenging and compelling, stretching beyond what is comfortable.

Sample Vision Statements

EES will be an educational center that provides a safe, caring, and enriching atmosphere for all learners.

School, home, and community will collaborate to ensure optimal development of educational skills and values that promote successful, lifelong learning.

WES will be a school that supports maximum learning for all students, enabling them to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

MBHS will create an environment that will produce concerned citizens who lead their communities in a 21^{st}-century global society.

SERVE. (1997). *Planning for school improvement.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

MODULE THREE

Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Worksheet 5—Writing a Mission Statement

1. What is the district's most important work?

2. What is the district's vision?

3. How will the work accomplish the vision?

4. Who is responsible for the work?

5. What evidence will determine that the mission is accomplished?

After discussing these questions, a team member or subcommittee should summarize the team's thoughts into a concise statement or series of statements that reflect the mission of the district school system.

Example of a Mission Statement

The mission of the Hoke County School District, as a diversified community of lifelong learners, is to commit ourselves and others to challenge students to their full learning potentials; to develop each individual's mind, body, and heart; and to inspire students to become productive members of our global society, through an integrated instructional program.

MODULE THREE

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Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE FOUR

MAKING [illegible] MATTER

A Systematic Approach
to Developing the Local
Consolidated Plan

4 CONDUCTING A COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Region IV
Comprehensive
at AEL

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ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview
Module Two: Establishing the Team
Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements
Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies
Module Six: Planning Professional Development
Module Seven: Linking the Pieces
Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan
Module Nine: Implementing the Plan
Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

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A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

4 CONDUCTING A COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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About Module Four

Module Four describes a step-by-step process for conducting a comprehensive needs assessment.

Step One:	Identify types of data to use.
Step Two:	Assign data collection responsibilities to team members.
Step Three:	Review and organize data.
Step Four:	Examine data to identify strengths, areas of need, and root causes and connections.
Step Five:	Establish priority needs.
Step Six:	Write goals and objectives.
Step Seven:	Review data-based needs identified at individual schools or clusters of schools.
Step Eight:	Share the needs assessment for input on revisions.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to conducting a school district needs assessment. The module provides information on organizing the needs assessment process and collecting a variety of data to develop a complete picture of the district. Examples included throughout the module illustrate effective needs assessment strategies.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While the worksheets may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness for *Module Five.*

Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Absenteeism at Truman High was a growing problem. On any one day, approximately five percent of the student body was not in class. The school enacted strict policies that included both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Still, the problem became worse. The school improvement planning team decided to examine the issue more closely. They developed questions that would help them analyze absenteeism.

- Who are the absent students? Do the same students have repeated absences? When are they absent? Are there more absences in certain grade levels?
- What is the demographic profile of the students with repeated absences? How do these students perform academically? What activities do these students participate in? What kind of support do they get from the school? What kind of support do they get outside of school?
- How do the students explain their absences? What is their attitude toward school?

As the team brainstormed questions, they realized that the issue was complex, and it would take a lot of effort to collect the data to answer these questions.

For each question, they identified types of data and their sources. Much of the data was on file in the main office. Getting data directly from the students would entail some creativity. The group assigned tasks and agreed to meet in three weeks to discuss the data.

When the team reconvened and presented the data, some of the conclusions were obvious, but some were surprising. The team discovered that at least 60 percent of the students on the past year's absentee lists had a pattern of repeated absences, missing [illegible] from three to five days a month. These students generally performed poorly and were uninvolved in school activities. The team dug deeper. Who were these students, and why were they missing so much school?

The most interesting data came from the students themselves. One team member met with these kids to get their perspectives on why they didn't attend regularly. She discovered that most of the students came from low-income households. In a number of the households, both parents worked. When young children were ill, the high school-aged siblings stayed home to care for them. Also, many of these students worked to help support their families. The biggest employer of high school students was a factory that hired on-call. When big shipments were received or sent, students would miss school to work. The student interviews also revealed that most of these students wanted to perform better in school.

The data led to understanding the real causes for much absenteeism and to looking at ways to address the problem. The members discussed a change from providing negative reinforcement to eliminate absenteeism to providing academic support to help students catch up when they were absent due to family and work obligations.

By carefully framing questions and gathering strong data to answer the questions, the planning team identified a fundamental problem—high school students from impoverished backgrounds miss school to help their families.

In this module, the planning team will

- Identify data needed
- Assign data collection responsibilities to team members
- Examine data to identify areas of strength and need
- Review and organize collected data
- Identify reasons for the discrepancy between actual student performance and desired performance level
- Identify priority needs on which to focus resources
- Write goals and objectives based on identified needs

Expected Outcomes

- The team will prepare needs assessment based on multiple sources of data.
- Stakeholders will use the assessment to compile a list of the district's priority needs.
- The district will write goals and objectives that address its prioritized needs.

Basic Premises

- Information is gathered from a cross-section of the school and community—faculty, administrators, students, parents, and community leaders.
- Information is gathered through student achievement data, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations to provide a complete picture of the district.
- Data are processed and summarized in meaningful and statistically sound ways to use when establishing priority needs and goals for the consolidated plan.
- The needs assessment is the foundation for data-based decision making.
- Goals, objectives, and priorities relate directly to needs identified from the data.

What Is Needs Assessment?

Need—*The discrepancy between what is and what should be.*

Needs Assessment—*The systematic process of gathering information necessary to identify needs of specific groups of people. It is the most crucial step in the planning process.*

A comprehensive needs assessment is the foundation of any good plan. Data gathered from a variety of sources can provide information relevant to student achievement. Accumulated data can help define a situation, show how prevalent it is, and show how it has changed over time. This information creates a comprehensive view of a district, rather than just a snapshot.

The team should examine data to identify discrepancies between what is currently happening in the district and what their vision for education says should be happening. Team members should discuss the kinds and causes of discrepancies. Then they should determine priority needs that will guide the selection of strategies and programs to help students achieve.

The Steps of Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Step One

Identify Types of Data to Use

A consolidated plan must be based on current data from a variety of sources. Use the data to reveal underlying connections and root causes for areas of low student performance. *Table 1—Suggested Categories of Data* lists many sources of data that help to create a full picture of the district.

Using Existing Data

Most of the data for a comprehensive needs assessment is already available. Some will have been compiled previously for other purposes; some data will need to be collected, organized, and developed into an easily understandable report.

Teams may use state-generated statistical profiles or school performance reports. The most recent standardized tests and other assessment information are important sources of data, as are dropout reports, demographics of the student body, teacher experience and training levels, and the instructional materials currently in use. The team should focus on all data that relate to student learning and the quality of teaching in the district.

Tip: Needs assessments recently performed for other purposes are timesaving resources.

Collecting New Data

As the team progresses through the needs assessment process, members may identify areas where no data exist or they may ask questions that go beyond what the current data provide. Often times, "why" questions will necessitate specialized data collection strategies that may include surveys, meetings, or interviews.

The South Carolina Department of Education, in its guide for planning school reform, suggests the following:

> It is very important that you think carefully about the group of people (sample) that you survey or interview. Your objective is not to make your school [or district] appear to be wonderful. Your objective is to determine the needs of children so that they might receive the best education possible to prepare them for their future. Therefore, to obtain the best results, include people who are not always agreeable to your way of thinking and who may not participate in the school as frequently as others. (p. 56)

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Surveys

The South Carolina guide recommends the following:

> Surveys may be obtained from a variety of sources. Schools [or districts] may determine that they need to construct their own survey(s). These should be carefully constructed. Design a questionnaire which answers questions you may have about learning, teaching strategies, and perceptions—and why you have these perceptions. Do not forget to ask parents, teachers, and students about opinions on ways the instructional program, the climate, and other areas could be changed to help children become successful in school. Remember, some of your parents, community members, or others may not be able to read. It is important to obtain information from them. One school solved this problem by holding an annual carnival and setting up a booth for parents and community members to be interviewed by other parents, teachers, and aides using a survey. They gained a great deal of information. (p. 56)

Whether a school or district uses a commercially developed survey or develops its own, it should pilot the survey with a small number of respondents

Table 1

Suggested Categories of Data

Attendance, Performance, and Behavioral Data

- Graduation and Promotion Rates
- Discipline Data
- Dropout and Transfer Information
- Test Scores
- Classroom Management Methods
- Student Behavior

Demographics

- Ethnic Groups
- Free and Reduced Lunches
- Parent Involvement
- Population Trends
- Pupil/Teacher Ratio
- Unique Community Characteristics (e.g., Military Base, Reservation, etc.)
- Business, Commerce, and Industry

Faculty

- Ethnic Groups (Reflecting the school population?)
- Teacher Experience and Training Levels
- Teacher Attrition, Absenteeism
- Type and Numbers of Support Staff
- Professional Development Opportunities

Physical Plant

Recognition/Awards

Instructional Materials

- Textbooks and Workbooks
- Equipment such as TV, VCR, Maps, Globes, Overhead Projector
- Computers
- PE, Art, and Music Materials

Instruction

- Basic Programs
- Vocational Programs
- ESL Programs
- Programs for Advanced Students
- Dropout Prevention Programs
- Title I Basic and Title I Migrant Programs
- Teaching Methods
- Student and Faculty Handbook
- Budget

to ensure that the questions are clearly written and elicit useful information. Administering surveys is time consuming and labor intensive; the team needs to take precautions to ensure that the effort will be worthwhile.

Meetings

Meetings and focus groups are ways to collect useful qualitative data. These should be structured with carefully designed questions. It may be interesting to compare data from meetings with different role groups, such as one with teachers and one with parents. Ask exactly the same questions in each meeting to ensure consistency of data.

The South Carolina Department of Education explains

> Meetings with different groups of people are very enlightening, and a great deal of wonderful information can be obtained. In meetings, you are able to ask not only the perceptions of the group, but also why group members have the perceptions they do. Meetings can be held with community members, teachers, school staff, parents, administrators, or business leaders OR with a combination of all/some of the identified groups. (p. 56)

Interviews

Interviews are useful for collecting information from persons who would otherwise not fill out surveys or attend meetings. They are also useful for collecting sensitive information that people may feel uncomfortable discussing publicly. The South Carolina Department of Education guide suggests, "Interviews should include predetermined questions, specific or general, about the school [or district] on a particular topic or a variety of topics. Interviews can be conducted in person (probably best) or over the phone." (p. 56) **If the interviewer chooses to tape a phone conversation, he or she by law must request the respondent's permission.**

Step Two

Assign Data Collection Responsibilities to Team Members

Once the team identifies which data they need, it must determine sources for the data. For example, if the team identifies student mobility as one factor that may be impacting test scores, it must decide on the best sources for information on student mobility. It may decide to look at transfer data, dropout rates, and homeless and migrant populations.

Example 1

Bridgewater School District's Data Collection Plan

Bridgewater's planning team used the Data Collection Planning Worksheet to collect information about the status of school district programs. Below is a partially completed sample of their worksheet.

1	2	3	4	5
Topic/Subject	**Data Needed or Collected**	**Source of Data**	**Who Will Collect it?**	**Deadline**
Student Achievement a) MAT7 Scores	District Testing	Research Office	Mike Martin	1/5/00
b) Writing Samples	State Assessment Report			

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1	2	3	4	5
Topic/Subject	**Data Needed or Collected**	**Source of Data**	**Who Will Collect it?**	**Deadline**
Attendance a) Attendance Rate by School	Principal's End-of-Year Report	Superintendent's Office	Susan Zanuk	1/5/00
Graduation Rates a) Annual Graduation Rate by School	Principal's End-of-Year Report	Superintendent's Office	Susan Zanuk	1/5/00
Retention Rates				
Disciplinary Actions				
Student Mobility a) Dropout Rate	State Profile of School District Populations	Research Office	Mike Martin	1/5/00
b) Transfer Rate				
c) Migrant Population				
d) Homeless Population				
Parental Involvement a) Parent's Attitudes Toward the Schools	Survey	To be Developed and Administered	Lamar Elliott	2/1/00
Professional Development a) List of District Workshops Conducted	Annual Report of Professional Development Office	Professional Development Office	Oliver Pitt	1/7/00
School Needs a) Identified Goals and Priorities	School Improvement Planning	District Office	Nancy Night William Smith Michelle Isen	2/1/00
Other				

Table 2

Sample "Smart" Questions to Ask about Data

Questions to Ask about Test Scores

- How does this year's performance compare with last year's?
- What changes have occurred in the last year—curriculum changes, student population changes, programs added or eliminated?
- How do district results compare with state and national norms?
- What percentage of students scored in the first quartile of the standardized tests?
- Is the percentage of students scoring in the upper quartile about the same across all subgroups? The lower quartile?
- Are there any differences in scores among groups of students—students of different races, ethnic groups, or socioeconomic backgrounds?
- If schools track students, does this practice contribute to disparities in test scores?
- Are there obvious trends in student performance by grade level or content area?
- How would team members describe students who are failing or at-risk of failing to meet state standards for student performance?
- Are gifted and talented or advanced placement programs representative of all groups of the student population?
- Do grading patterns differ according to social class, ethnicity, or gender? If there are disparities, do they correspond with those found when standardized test scores are disaggregated?
- Are students with special needs, such as limited English proficiency, receiving services adequate to ensure their achievement of the same high standards as non-LEP students?
- What percentage of students with disabilities is mainstreamed into academic classes? What percentage of students with disabilities receives a portion of their instructional programs in community settings?
- How many non-disabled students serve as mentors, special friends, or helpers to students with disabilities?
- Which special needs students are represented in the student population (migrant, speech/language impaired, LEP)?
- What percent of the total student population does each group represent?
- What percentage of students is identified as exceptional?

Questions about Faculty and Staff

- What are the faculty and staff levels of professional certification?
- What percentages of the faculty hold advanced degrees?
- What is the attrition rate for teachers in the district? In individual schools?
- Is there a mentoring program for new teachers?
- What professional staff are available to schools (social workers, psychologists, nurses, speech and hearing specialists, foreign language interpreters, guidance counselors, music and art teachers, etc.)? How many students does each staff member serve?
- What professional development was provided to faculty during the last year?
- What professional development do teaching assistants receive?

Questions about Instructional Materials/Technology

- How many computers are available to students at each grade level?
- Are instructional resources up-to-date? Do they meet the needs of the students?
- What are the instructional resources most often requested by teachers?
- Are there resources available to address needs of low-performing students?

Table 2 continued

Questions about Parent and Community Involvement

- How are parent volunteers utilized in schools?
- What community organizations are linked to the schools? In what ways?
- What roles do parents play in the decision making at the building level? At the district level?
- What school activities get the best response (attendance) from parents?
- What is the educational level of parents?
- How are parents involved in making decisions about their children's education?

Team members are then assigned responsibility for collecting certain data. As much as possible, data gathering should be assigned to members with easiest access to the information. If the team is conducting surveys, it may help to have a committee conduct surveys under the guidance of someone skilled in designing data-gathering instruments.

The team should reach consensus on a due date for all information, keeping in mind the time involved in the survey process.

Worksheet 1—Data Collection Planning is a record-keeping tool to assist teams in the data collection process. (Copies of all worksheets are included in *Appendix A*.)

Step Three

Review and Organize Data

Worksheet 2—Collecting and Organizing Data Checklist will assist teams in ensuring that they have the data they need: the data do not violate any privacy regulations; the data are accurate, up-to-date, and comprehensive. The team should complete this checklist as a group after all the recommended data have been collected.

Raw data in general are not particularly useful. An analysis that shows comparisons, trends, and relationships among the data and represents the data in understandable ways provides a strong foundation for identifying needs. Graphic depictions of the data are particularly useful. A plan for analyzing data should be in place before the team begins working with collected data.

The team should answer the following questions.

- Who will organize the collected data?
- Which team members can assist with the data analysis?
- Will the team need to hire a consultant to guide the process?
- How will the analysis be conducted?
- What is the date by which the analysis must be complete?
- How will the findings be shared with the larger school community?

Step Four

Examine Data to Identify Strengths, Areas of Need, and Root Causes and Connections

Once the data are organized and represented in understandable ways, the team needs to review them to look for connections and root causes for low-performing areas. Many factors contribute to low student achievement. As the team identifies these factors, they will be able to select programs and strategies that target the real problems.

Table 2—Sample "Smart" Questions to Ask about Data (on the previous page) helps team members examine data. As they address these questions, they will begin to draw conclusions that reveal connections and underlying causes of low student performance. They should use the results of preliminary analyses to develop additional questions to explore until they have reached meaningful conclusions

Example 2

Worksheet 3 from Bridgewater School District

Identification of Discrepancies between District Status and Desired Levels of Achievement

The following example is from Bridgewater School District's planning team. Notice how they have identified discrepancies in their math scores and included reasons for the discrepancies. Keep in mind that reasons are more than best guesses; they should be based on data and facts.

2	6	7	8	9
Data Needed or Collected	**Where We Should Be**	**Where We Are**	**Discrepancy**	**Reason(s) for Discrepancy**
Math test scores for grades 3-6	100% at or above grade level	57% testing at or above grade level	43% of grades 3-6 students testing below grade level in math	Math is taught late in the day. Math skills of students entering 3rd grade are low. K-2 math curriculum is not rigorous. Switch from departmentalized to self-contained teaching in the elementary schools New test–scores were low throughout the state. New math textbooks do not align w/state assessment. Math classes focus on computation; often students are not engaged.
Annual graduation rate by school	100% of students entering 9th grade graduating within 4 years	92% of students who enter 9th grade graduating within 4 years	8% of students drop out between 9th and 12th grades.	Socioeconomics—Poorer students must help with family finances; many students work during the school day. Block Scheduling—Students who change schools are penalized because the have to repeat courses if they miss 8 days. Students get discouraged and drop out. Students with poor attendance fall further behind in coursework, and many get discouraged and drop out. Teenage pregnancy

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about what's happening in the district and are able to decide what actions to take to address problems.

Worksheet 3 — Identification of Discrepancies between District Status and Desired Levels of Achievement helps the team to determine where the district is with respect to each of the categories of information identified in **Worksheet 1** and determine reasons for discrepancies between where the district is and where it needs to be. **Worksheet 3** is a continuation of **Worksheet 1** (which explains the unusual numbering of the columns).

In Column 9 of *Example 2*, the team explored likely reasons for the discrepancies that exist between what is and what should be. It is a common tendency at this point to jump to conclusions about causes and then move right on to solutions. However, the team will want to work together, examining data and brainstorming, to identify reasons why discrepancies exist and determining if these reasons are supported by data.

Step Five

Establish Priority Needs

When likely reasons have been identified and recorded in Column 9, the team should look at the reasons and identify similarities among them. Common or similar reasons grouped together form a priority.

> **Example:** In reviewing the reasons for the discrepancy in the Bridgewater district between where grades 3-6 math performance should be and where it is, the team identified several reasons listed in Worksheet 4. They established the following as a priority need:
>
> K-2 students need a stronger foundation for grades 3-6 math.
>
> Similarly, the Bridgewater team identified the following priority needs to address the drop-out rate:
>
> High school students who have family responsibilities that prevent regular attendance and lead to dropping out need support and encouragement to stay in school.

Once priority needs have been identified, the team should rank them in order of importance. The team should reach consensus on the following questions.

Which needs, when addressed, will

- Make the greatest impact on student achievement
- Affect the greatest number of students
- Have the most sustained and long-term impact on the students

The team should select a limited number of needs to address across the district. This may be difficult because all the identified priorities are important. However, the group should keep in mind that:

- Targeting resources intensively in a few areas will have a greater impact than spreading resources so thin that they address many needs only superficially.
- When a priority need is addressed intensively, not only does student achievement improve in that targeted area, but the improvement usually carries over to other areas.

For example, if a school targets math improvement and implements programs for increasing problem-solving skills, these skills will carry over to other classes as well.

- Priority needs are not limited to one grade or content area. These needs necessitate that a whole school — teachers, support staff, parents, and students — focus on activities and programs to address these needs. This type of cross-school or cross-district focus provides cohesiveness to curriculum and instruction,

Example 3

Worksheet 4 from Bridgewater School District—Goal Setting

The following worksheet shows how the Bridgewater planning team developed goals and objectives for two priority needs.

1	2	3
Priority Needs	**What We Would Like to See (Goals)**	**How We Will Accomplish This (Objectives)**
K-2 students need a stronger foundation for grades 3-6 math.	By May 1999, 75% of students in grades 3-6 will perform proficiently on the state math assessment; the percentage will increase to 100% by May 2001.	**Objective 1—**In September 1998, the district will implement a new K-2 curriculum revised to include more rigor, align with the state assessment, and articulate with the grades 3-6 math curriculum; the new curriculum will include curriculum guides and benchmarks for periodic assessment. The new curriculum will include inquiry-based and hands-on activities. **Objective 2—**K-2 teachers will implement engaging, hands-on, standards-based instructional activities. **Objective 3—**K-2 teachers will receive professional development on the new curriculum, periodic assessment of students, and hands-on instructional activities; sustained professional development activities will include teachers sharing ideas, team teaching, and peer coaching. **Objective 4—**Faculty meetings will include discussions among K-6 teachers that focus on ways to prepare children for math in grades 3-6. **Objective 5—**Parents and families of K-2 students will become involved in their children's math learning during two Family Math Night activities to be held during the 1998/99 school year.
High dropout rate in high school due to socioeconomics—poorer students must help with family finances;	By May 1999, the high school dropout rate will decrease to 4%; by May 2000, the dropout rate will decrease to 2%.	**Objective 1**—Evening and Saturday classes in core subjects will be instituted for students who work during the day. **Objective 2**—Evening and Saturday tutoring will be provided for at-risk students and those with a high absence rate.

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1	2	3
Priority Needs	**What We Would Like to See (Goals)**	**How We Will Accomplish This (Objectives)**
many students hold jobs during the school day. Students with poor attendance fall behind in coursework, and many get discouraged and drop out.		**Objective 3**—A retention counselor/home-school coordinator will be hired to work with students and families to help students stay in school and to encourage students to participate in evening and Saturday classes and tutoring opportunities.

and students find reinforcement from multiple sources. For example, in a district that has identified reading as a priority need, improving reading becomes everyone's job. Programs and strategies will involve teachers from all grades, administrators, support staff, and parents.

Step Six

Write Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goals are the cornerstones of the consolidated plan. Goals focus on student learning and teacher capacity (professional development, recruitment, retention). By maintaining this focus and basing goals on identified priorities, teams avoid becoming victims of selecting "what's hot" in education at the moment.

A goal is a statement that anticipates a specific improvement as a result of district action.

Goals should be concrete and/or measurable. For example: A school district's goal might be

By the year 2001, 100% of math scores for students in grades K-12 will be equal to or better than the state average.

It is possible that two priorities can be addressed by one goal statement. It is also possible that the teams will want to develop more than one goal for a priority. The consolidated plan should, nevertheless, limit the number of goals to ensure that a district's efforts are targeted for the most efficient use of resources.

Objectives and strategies make goals more concrete and attainable. Objectives should offer a clear picture of how goals are going to be met. They are statements that specifically identify what will be accomplished, by whom, when (during what time frame) and how it will be measured.

An objective defines how the goal will be accomplished.

Completing **Worksheet 4—Goal Setting** will help the team clarify the district's priorities, goals, and objectives and show clear alignment among the three.

Tip: Teams should be especially aware of non-academic needs—socioeconomic, behavioral, family, and community-based—that present barriers to student learning.

Step Seven

Review Data-Based Needs Identified at Individual Schools or Clusters of Schools

One of the greatest challenges of district consolidated planning is to ensure that individual school needs are addressed, while those of the district are addressed. The planning team will assess the needs and develop a plan for the improvement of education in the district as a whole, but the team needs to examine the needs of each school to cluster common needs and identify specialized needs.

Most schools should have school improvement plans developed through a planning process similar to the one described here—vision and goal setting, needs assessment, and program selection. In many cases, school improvement plans reflect district goals, which lends a degree of commonality to the plans. In other cases, school improvement plans are based on needs identified at the particular school and may differ greatly from school to school.

For a school community to support a district plan, the stakeholders must feel that their school's needs are addressed. The magnitude of the task of examining each school's improvement plan will vary in each district, depending on the degree of alignment between district needs and goals and the needs and goals of particular schools, the number of schools in the district, and the similarities of students across the district. **Worksheet 5** will help team members examine school improvement plans to identify needs that are common across the district, clustered at several schools, or unique to individual schools.

Step Eight

Share the Needs Assessment

The team should share the needs assessment data and identified priority needs, goals, and objectives with all schools and other stakeholders for input. It is important to get consensus on district goals. Because consolidated planning targets resources to areas of greatest need, some resources will likely be shifted away from areas where they have traditionally been spent. Administrators, faculty, and staff are more willing to support the reallocation of resources if the data clearly justify the need.

The team should make revisions based on input.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After the team has completed a draft of district needs and goals, use the following checklist to review it.

_____1. The needs assessment is based on multiple sources of data.

_____2. The needs assessment includes student achievement data from the state assessment.

_____3. The needs assessment is written in an easy to understand format that includes graphic representations of the data.

_____4. The needs assessment includes priority needs and goals that relate directly to the data.

_____5. The needs assessment represents a district view, yet includes individual school needs as well.

_____6. The goals align with the vision for the district.

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_____7. The goals include measurable objectives.

_____8. The goals and objectives relate to student learning and teacher capacity.

_____9. The needs assessment reflects input from schools and other stakeholders in the district that have reviewed this information.

If all the items on the checklist are checked, the team should move on to *Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies.*

References & Resources

Bernhardt, V. (1994). *The school portfolio: A comprehensive framework for school improvement.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, Inc.

SERVE. (1997). *Planning for school improvement.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

South Carolina Department of Education. (1998). Title I Schoolwide/Act 135: Catalysts for school reform. (Available from the South Carolina Department of Education, 1429 Senate Street, Columbia, South Carolina).

APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Worksheet 1—Data Collection Planning

Instructions

1. For each topic listed in Column 1, identify the data the planning team wants to examine for the district. List those data elements in Column 2.
2. Determine where the data are or how they should be collected, and put that information in Column 3.
3. In Column 4, assign a planning team member to collect each piece of data.
4. In Column 5, indicate the deadline for having data ready to share with the team. This date should be well in advance of the next team meeting.

Tip: *Be careful not to overburden any one team member with data collection assignments. If necessary, form committees to collect certain data.*

1	2	3	4	5
Topic/Subject	**Data Needed or Collected**	**Source of Data**	**Who Will Collect it?**	**Deadline**
Student Achievement				
Attendance				
Graduation Rates				

1 Topic/Subject	2 Data Needed or Collected	3 Source of Data	4 Who Will Collect it?	5 Deadline
Retention Rates				
Disciplinary Actions				
Student Mobility				
Parental Involvement				
Professional Development				
School Needs				
Other				

Worksheet 2—Collecting and Organizing Data Checklist

___ 1. The data represent all stakeholder groups including teachers, administrators, school staff, parents, students, and community members.

___ 2. All relevant grade levels and content areas are represented. Extracurricular areas were included in the needs assessment along with curricular areas.

___ 3. All schools' needs and goals are represented in the data.

___ 4. The information on student achievement is sufficient and reliable.

___ 5. The information on student achievement represents data from multiple measures and assessments.

___ 6. All targeted groups of students are included in the data, including Title I, migrant, homeless, neglected/delinquent, American Indian, English language learners, students with special needs and populations of students unique to the school or school district.

___ 7. Student achievement data are disaggregated for underrepresented and special-needs student groups.

___ 8. The information is accurate, up-to-date, and understandable.

___ 9. The collected data do not violate privacy regulations. There are no names, identification numbers, or other ways to identify students or staff among the data.

Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Worksheet 3—Identification of Discrepancies between District Status & Desired Levels of Achievement

Instructions

1. Column 2 information comes from **Worksheet 1—Data Collection Planning** used in Step 2. It is the data necessary to accomplish the needs analysis.
2. Column 6, "Where We Should Be," is the standard or goal the team wants to achieve. This is based on the vision for the district or state goals.
3. Column 7, "Where We Are," is the current status as revealed in the collected data.
4. Column 8, "Discrepancy," is the difference between columns 6 and 7.
5. Column 9, "Reason(s) for Discrepancy," answers the question, "Why does this discrepancy exist?" This question is critical for identifying the need from the data.

2	6	7	8	9
Data Needed or Collected	**Where We Should Be**	**Where We Are**	**Discrepancy**	**Reason(s) for Discrepancy**

MODULE FOUR

2. Data Needed or Collected	6 Where We Should Be	7 Where We Are	8 Discrepancy	9 Reason(s) for Discrepancy

Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Worksheet 4—Goal-Setting

Instructions

1. List identified priority needs that the district will address.
2. Develop goals that encompass each priority need.
3. Develop objectives that show how and when this goal will be accomplished.

1	2	3
Priority Needs	What We Would Like to See (Goals)	How We Will Accomplish This (Objectives)

Worksheet 5—School Improvement Plan Review: List of Schools & Identified Priority Needs

Instructions

1. In Column 1, list all schools in the district.
2. In Column 2, list priority needs identified from each school improvement plan.
3. Examine Column 2 to identify priority needs to complete Columns 3, 4, and 5.
4. For larger districts, categorize worksheets by elementary, middle, and high schools.

1	2	3	4	5
Schools in the District	**Identified Priority Needs**	**Needs Common to All Schools**	**Needs Common to Two or More Schools**	**Needs Specific to One School**

MODULE FOUR

4

Region IV
Comprehensive
at AEL

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE FIVE

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach
to Developing the Local
Consolidated Plan

5

IDENTIFYING & SELECTING RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAMS & STRATEGIES

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

5 IDENTIFYING & SELECTING RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAMS & STRATEGIES

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE FIVE

Making Resources Matter

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MODULE FIVE

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About Module Five

Module Five describes a step-by-step process for selecting programs and strategies that align with district goals.

Step One: Review existing programs and strategies.

Step Two: Research effective programs and strategies.

Step Three: Make recommendations for program changes.

Step Four: Share recommendations on programs and strategies with schools.

Step Five: Address needs at individual schools or clusters of schools.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to selecting programs. The module provides resources and recommendations for ways districts and schools can select appropriate high-quality programs and strategies. Examples included in the module illustrate effective practices for program selection.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While the worksheets may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness for *Module Six*.

Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

One of the Aberville school district goals was to improve reading skills across the district, with a focus on teaching and reinforcing basic skills at the elementary level. In 1997, only 51 percent of fifth-graders in the district passed the state reading assessment. After several years of low student achievement scores, teachers' frustration began to turn into accepting the status quo. They felt they worked as hard as they could, but improvement in student achievement was negligible. "After all," some whispered, "look at where these kids come from."

The district planning team was determined to help students improve their reading skills. They examined the reading scores in relation to other factors at the school and learned two things: The teachers felt that students needed a more structured approach to reading, and teachers themselves needed training in new instructional strategies. The team examined district reading programs and discovered a range of approaches from school to school and from grade level to grade level. They questioned the benefits of having so many programs and began to research a more comprehensive and continuous approach. The team read about Success for All and visited several schools in the state that were using the program. They also studied the research on the program to see how much student achievement improved after the program was implemented. The findings were all positive. The team shared their research with teachers across the district and gained support for recommending that Success for All be implemented in the five Title I Schoolwide schools.

Success for All jolted school staff into new values, attitudes, and pedagogy. One principal explained, "We spent years tweaking our curriculum. We kept adding things that we thought would work. We thought they would be exciting for children and would impact favorably on student achievement. Although the activities were fun, exciting, and enjoyable, they did not directly affect student achievement. So, we would add more and work harder."

"Success for All," the principal continued, "gave staff the much-needed impetus to move forward in a different direction from what had been tried and hadn't been successful. Teachers were willing to work just as hard, if not harder, because they felt more focused. They became much more reflective in reviewing what they could continue that was successful and what they could eliminate that was not successful. Plus, they felt like a team. Teachers from different grade levels were sharing successes and strategies in a way that had not occurred before. And the best news of all: after one year, reading scores had begun to improve."

The principal concluded, "I think we began to make real progress here when our teachers stopped wishing for the 'right students' and focused their energy on finding good programs for the students they have."

In this module, the planning team will

- Review existing programs and strategies at the school and district levels for effectiveness in meeting district goals
- Find research-based information on effective practices and programs
- Identify new programs appropriate for the district or ways to enhance existing programs
- Share information on programs and practices with schools for their input
- Select programs and practices that align with district goals
- Identify programs for individual schools or clusters of schools with specialized needs

Expected Outcomes

- Programs and strategies that address priority needs will be selected.
- The rationale for program selection will include the research base and appropriateness for the district.

Basic Premises

What Do Effective Schools Have in Common?

1. **Clear goals.** Every plan for comprehensive school improvement should have the same ultimate goals—to increase student achievement and school community satisfaction by ensuring that the school's primary functions are teaching and learning. School goals are used as guidelines in identifying educational objectives and planning activities.
2. **School-focused improvement.** Just as each student is different, so every school is unique, with its own particular character, strengths, and needs. The principal, faculty, and advisory committees work together on long-range plans. Short-term strategies will, at best, bring about only short-term improvement. Typical improvement plans require several years to achieve full implementation.
3. **Strong leadership.** Effective schools research consistently shows that leadership from the administration is critical to school improvement. In most cases, school principal fills this role, providing guidance, supervision, resources, and support both instructionally and administratively. The principal also lets staff know that their voice in school decisions is welcome and wanted.
4. **High expectations.** In effective schools, teachers and administrators believe that they can create a climate in which all students can learn and improve. Academic goals are clearly stated, and

expected norms of achievement and progress for all subject areas and grade levels are defined. These schools have policies that reflect confidence in their students and encourage the use of sound instructional practices that recognize students' individual needs.

5. **Focused program of instruction.** Instructional programs in effective schools focus on the achievement of clearly defined and displayed objectives. Commonly stressed is student acquisition of basic skills, particularly reading and math skills. Once basic skills are mastered, successful schools focus on higher order/critical thinking skills. The curriculum is well planned and designed to provide continuity across grades and subjects.
6. **Collaborative decision making.** Administrators in effective schools seem to have relinquished the notion that coordination requires rigid control from the top down. Teachers who work with these administrators recognize and support the need for coordination and acknowledge that they should no longer function as independent agents in the classroom.
7. **Individual and organizational development.** In order to influence an entire school, development should be focused directly on school goals and should be schoolwide rather than specific to individual teachers or subjects.
8. **Order and discipline.** Orderly, clean, friendly, and democratic schools and classrooms promote high achievement. Effective schools have clear, firm, and consistent rules of conduct that are published and taught to every student.
9. **Maximized learning time.** Effective schools employ many strategies to enhance classroom learning time and protect it from excessive disruption. How teachers manage available classroom time is more important than the actual number of minutes allocated to instruction.
10. **Parent/community involvement.** Effective schools welcome parents and meet with them often, providing parents with various options for becoming involved in their children's education, especially in support of the instructional program.
11. **Incentives/rewards for academic success.** Excellence in achievement and behavior are recognized. Requirements for awards are clear, with evaluations based on standards rather than on comparisons with peers. Teacher excellence is also recognized, with student achievement an important criterion for success.
12. **Careful and continuous evaluation.** Student achievement and overall school improvement efforts are monitored carefully and frequently. Activities are modified and refined as necessary to improve performance and the instructional program.

Follman, J. M., Vedros, R. G., & Curry, B. (1993). *Comprehensive school improvement.* Greensboro, NC: SERVE.

Selecting Programs That Target District Needs

In developing the consolidated plan, the district planning team reviews existing programs in the district and a range of research-based programs to consider for implementation. It's critical that the team ensure alignment of programs with the district's needs, goals, and selected strategies. The team also ensures that programs are coordinated among schools.

Focusing on a few goals critical for student achievement targets resources for maximum impact. However, everyone must understand that targeting a limited number of priority needs means other needs will get less attention. Remember that strong initiatives in a limited number of areas will not only have maximum impact in those areas, but are likely to improve student achievement in other areas as well.

Steps to Identifying & Selecting Research Based Programs & Strategies

Step One

Review Existing Programs and Strategies

It's a common myth that education reform means scrapping all the old programs and implementing new ones. The reform planning process does help the district identify what is working and determine how to improve areas of need. Schools and districts should capitalize on (and celebrate) what already works; revise, refine, or eliminate what doesn't work effectively; and consider new programs where needs are not being met. A comprehensive needs assessment provides valuable data to serve as the basis for these decisions.

> **Tip:** Before scrapping an existing program, consider if it has been implemented long enough for impact to occur. The indicators of and barriers to the success of a program will vary according to how long the program has been operating in a school or district.

Worksheet 1 — Reviewing Current Programs and Strategies helps the team identify areas for improvement relating to district goals. The planning team should complete **Worksheet 1** for each goal and each current program relating to that goal. For questions #3 and #4, it is essential to consider data such as numbers of students impacted by the program, levels of students addressed, student performance on assessments and improvement since the program was implemented, integration with the overall school/district program, and parent and community support and involvement. (Copies of all worksheets are included in *Appendix A*.)

After completing this worksheet for each of the programs related to district goals, the planning team should be able to determine what kinds of programs and program enhancements they need to research.

Step Two

Research Effective Programs and Strategies

The planning team should study the research on issues relating to the district's goals. This research background, in combination with knowledge of the district, will serve as the basis for decisions to revise or enhance existing programs and to adopt new programs.

> **Tip:** The team may want to function as an action research study group. It might appoint committees to explore programs and strategies or to explore various issues. In addition to generating information for the consolidated plan, action research study groups can reinforce collegiality and provide valuable professional development experiences.

Identifying Sources for Research

Many sources of information are available to educators. The planning team should pay particular attention to information that provides data about a program's impact on improving student achievement.

- The state education agency can provide information on programs in relation to state standards and reform initiatives.
- The team may contact program developers and examine their impact data.
- The team may conduct an ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) search through a local library or by calling any one of the ERIC Clearinghouses. For help locating the best place to search ERIC, call 1-800-LET-ERIC or access on-line at http://www.aspensys.com/eric. See

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Appendix B for a listing of ERIC and Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses. An ERIC search provides an annotated list of articles on most topics related to education.

- Libraries at institutions of higher education usually house current journals or can obtain them.
- The U.S. Department of Education provides a wealth of resources and publications. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) or access on-line at http://www.ed.gov.
- Other resources include Regional Educational Laboratories, Comprehensive Centers, other federal technical assistance centers, national centers, and clearinghouses. Most of these organizations provide information on request for free or at a minimal cost. (See *Appendix C* for a list of organizations funded by the U.S. Department of Education.)
- On-line resources are abundant for those who have access to the Internet. (*Appendix C* includes website addresses for the organizations listed.)

It's important for teams to visit schools where successful programs are being used. Seeing a program in place in the classroom and discussing the program with users are critical to understanding how it works. State departments of education, Comprehensive Centers, Regional Educational Laboratories, and program developers can provide lists of sites where programs are being successfully implemented.

Conducting Research

The planning team should review the information generated in **Worksheet 1** to develop questions and identify issues to guide them in researching effective programs and practices.

> **Example:** The Hansford County planning team's needs assessment identified the improvement of reading as one of the district's goals. In completing **Worksheet 1**, the team realized that although several reading programs were in place, one area of great weakness was language delays in at-risk children in prekindergarten and kindergarten.
>
> In summarizing the information from **Worksheet 1**, the team discovered
>
> 1. Currently, Accelerated Reader is in place in all elementary schools; Reading Recovery is in four Title I Schoolwide Schools; and reading across the curriculum is in place in the high schools with a reading specialist working in each high school one day a week with teachers and students.
> 2. All schools in the district focus on reading as an integral part of instruction. Reading scores, though still below the state's required performance level, have risen over the past four years when the reading programs were implemented.
> 3. These programs focus on children in elementary school and high school. However, there are many children in prekindergarten and kindergarten classes with severe language delays that prevent them from developing pre-reading skills necessary for elementary level reading instruction. This year, 72 children out of 326 in the prekindergarten and kindergarten classes were identified as exhibiting language delays.
>
> The team concluded that the district should focus on the needs of the prekindergarten and kindergarten children with language delays to prepare them for reading.
>
> The team developed the following questions for research:
>
> 1. What are effective strategies for building language skills in developmentally-delayed early elementary school-level children?
> 2. What early language skills are critical for developing reading skills in kindergarten children?

3. What are effective strategies for helping parents of at-risk children build the language skills of their children?
4. What reading programs target at-risk children in the early grades?

It is important to have written summaries of the research with sources listed. **Worksheet 2—Research Summary** provides a format for summarizing each of the research questions.

Tip: Researchers should examine several sources to gain different perspectives on the issue.

Tip: Researchers should use a style manual such as that of the American Psychological Association (APA) to create a bibliographical listing for the source. This information will help if the research material needs to be located again. Also, a bibliographical listing is often required in citing research for programs in plans and proposals, and, at the very least, a well-documented source provides credibility to your research information.

Step Three

Make Recommendations for Program Changes

Most schools and districts select a variety of programs and strategies to improve student achievement; however, research raises some cautions about this selection process. District plans considered to be most effective do recommend a combination of strategies for improvement. However, these strategies must be carefully and systematically integrated into the district curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Guskey (1990) calls the effort of integrating strategies and programs "mutual adaptation." In this process, the district must adjust to the strategy and the strategy must be adjusted to fit the district. Program selection is more than examining a menu of options. Planning teams must keep district goals and the district system of education in mind to ensure that all the pieces fit together or can be adjusted to fit together.

Guskey provides five guidelines to aid planners. The comments following the boldfaced statements adapt them to the consolidated planning process.

1. **All innovative strategies in the improvement program should share common goals and premises.** District goals should guide the selection of programs and strategies. Focusing all programs on a few goals will ensure that the programs are mutually reinforcing.
2. **No single innovative strategy can do everything.** The dream of a silver bullet becomes more and more unrealistic as planners examine needs and the causes behind those needs. Needs that underlie a goal are usually multiple and complex; therefore, a variety of strategies is required to achieve a goal.
3. **The innovative strategies in the improvement program should complement each other.** As planners identify programs and strategies, they should discuss how the programs and strategies would relate to other innovations as well as current programs. They should discuss what "mutual adaptations" will need to occur; these adaptations will enhance the effectiveness of the programs.
4. **All innovative strategies need to be adapted to individual classroom and building conditions.** Professional development is a critical component of any innovation. The program selection process must include ways to support teachers as they adapt these programs in their classrooms. Teachers will need time to experiment and to process what needs to be changed, deleted, or improved.

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5. **When a well-conceived combination of innovative strategies is used, the results are likely to be greater than those attained using any single strategy.** The vision setting, needs assessment, and research components of the planning process allow for a careful and measured approach to selecting programs and strategies that target district goals in a unified, comprehensive, and continuous manner. Plans resulting from these efforts will counter the "flavor-of-the-month" approach, which results in fragmentation and discontinuity in programs, in frustration and cynicism on the part of educators who are mandated to try this year's new thing before last year's has been assimilated, and in minimal impact on student achievement.

> The primary task that lies ahead, therefore, is not so much the generation of ideas as their integration, not so much finding individual ideas that work as making a collection of ideas work together. (Guskey, 1990)

The findings from research should serve as a basis for enhancing existing programs, as well as implementing new ones. When programs need to be modified, the team should describe these changes, cite the research, and identify professional development and other resources needed for these changes to take place.

Changing Existing Programs

The review of current programs and existing needs will lead to a discussion of what changes to make in current programs. To maximize continuity and integration, the district should, whenever possible, build on and modify current programs. However, when warranted, the team should recommend the adoption of new programs to support current programs, replace programs that are not effective, or meet needs that are not currently being addressed.

Worksheet 3—Existing Program Enhancement, Modification, Support, or Discontinuance guides a discussion about changing existing programs to make them more effective. For each option to change or enhance an existing program, the team should describe the recommended change, cite the research that underlies this recommendation, identify the resources needed, and identify professional development needed (unless the team recommends discontinuance of a program). The research for the recommended change should include district student achievement data or other school-based data that relate to the current program, as well as data on how the program being considered has improved student achievement at other sites.

If the team recommends implementing a new program to support an existing program (#4 in **Worksheet 3**), they should read the next section on selecting new programs and complete **Worksheet 4—Program Description, Worksheet 5—Checklist for a Quality Program,** and **Worksheet 6—Checklist for Program Appropriateness**.

If student achievement data for a current program show no improvement over a reasonable period of time, and if the program has been in place long enough for full implementation and improvement to occur, the team may recommend discontinuing the program. Research and data will be essential to the rationale to discontinue it, particularly for those who may wish to continue the program. *Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan* provides guidance on ways to collect data on program implementation and impact.

Selecting New Programs

To address needs not being met by current programs, the planning team should research specific programs. Information is available from program developers, state departments of education, or technical assistance centers. For commercial programs, the team should obtain information from other sources than the developers to ensure that the research is objective. State departments of education usually have information on effective programs that includes student achievement data and districts where the programs are implemented in the state.

Worksheet 4—Program Description helps team members summarize information on programs they research and recommend. These summaries, along with copies of information provided in brochures and articles, should be kept in a file for reference. (The summary is also a convenient format to share information with schools for their input in the selection process.) Note that page 2 of the worksheet requires a description of the research and data that support the program. The emphasis on research reinforces the idea that all decisions and choices in the planning process should have a basis in research and data, whether from print sources, electronic sources, or current users.

Determining Program Quality

After the planning team researches programs and strategies, it needs to determine the quality of the programs. In its guidance on selecting comprehensive school reform models, the U.S. Department of Education provides the following dimensions for what constitutes reliable evidence of effectiveness of programs.

The theoretical or research foundation for the program: Theories or research findings explain why a comprehensive model and the practices included in the model work together to produce gains in student performance.

Evaluation-based evidence of improvements in student achievement: Evidence of educationally significant improvement is shown through reliable measures of student achievement in major subject areas before and after model implementation.

Evidence of effective implementation: Implementation is a description of what it takes to make the model fully operational in schools.

Evidence of replicability: Replicability means that the model has been successfully implemented in more than one school (p. 3).

Worksheet 5—Checklist for a Quality Program incorporates the U.S. Department of Education dimensions and provides criteria to determine which of the programs identified and summarized in **Worksheet 4** are quality programs. The planning team should discuss these criteria for each program under consideration.

Determining Program Appropriateness

Once the team has identified several quality programs, it will need to determine how appropriate the programs are for their school or district. **Worksheet 6—Checklist for Program Appropriateness** helps to decide how closely a program matches the particular needs and priorities of a school or district. The planning team should complete this checklist for each program.

Tip: Selecting a few programs enables a district to focus its efforts and resources more effectively than selecting many programs. Too many programs in a district results in fragmented efforts and resources.

Determining the Scope of Implementation

After the team has narrowed its selections to a few quality programs that would match the district's needs and context, it should discuss where the programs should be implemented. The following three questions may guide this discussion for each program:

- For what grade levels is this program appropriate?
- Which schools in the district are the highest priority for implementation? (This question is relevant if limited resources are at issue.)
- Should the district pilot-test the program on a limited basis? (Pilot-testing a program in one or two schools will allow the district to see if the program meets the needs of the students before a large chunk of resources is allocated. If the program succeeds, the pilot schools can serve as demonstration sites for new implementers.)

Completing **Worksheet 7—Recommended Program Scope of Implementation** helps the team briefly document where the programs they have selected should be implemented.

Step Four

Share Recommendations on Programs and Strategies with Schools

After selecting programs and strategies for recommendation, the team should share its work with school staff, parents, and other stakeholders in the district. **Worksheets 4-7** may serve as a summary of the team's work and ensure that consistent information is shared throughout the district.

Obtaining commitment for reform is the most critical step in the planning process. Team members may want to discuss recommended programs with the principal, faculty, and parents at each school. Change is difficult for everyone involved, so the team should reinforce several points.

- These proposed changes relate directly to needs and goals identified by the district.
- Taking steps to improve student achievement ensures the best education possible for the students.
- Professional development and support for changes will be abundant and ongoing.
- Everyone in the district is a partner in reform. Input from school staff, parents, and other stakeholders throughout the district is critical—both for planning and implementation.
- The plan is a living document to be revised and improved as data from innovations are collected. No one will be locked into implementing programs that don't work.

Step Five

Address Needs at Individual Schools or Clusters of Schools

One of the more difficult issues in district consolidated planning is addressing the overall needs of the districts while meeting other needs at individual schools. Districts that are consolidating programs handle this situation in a variety of ways. The key in each case is communication and consensus. District teams must involve schools in the planning process from the beginning, and each component of the plan must reflect their input and interests. Consolidated planning must not be a top-down process. Lay a strong foundation at the very beginning of the process by including input from all stakeholders. Then, when the program and budget pieces of the plan are put in place, schools will be more likely to support the district goals and to implement the programs to support them.

The following strategies show how some districts build consensus for consolidated planning.

1. As schools develop their improvement plans, they are encouraged to adopt district goals that have been identified through a process that involves the schools. In other words, schools help develop district goals and then are asked to address these goals in their plans. The result is alignment between school improvement plans and the district plan. The district plan supports the school plans and vice versa.
2. Program coordinators for the consolidated programs are members of the district planning team. Through their ongoing communication with schools, they ensure that school needs are reflected in the comprehensive needs assessment. They can also communicate district goals to the schools and influence the development of school improvement plans. This communication ensures that there are no surprises when the draft plan is shared with schools and that school improvement plans

align with the district plan. Throughout the consolidated planning process, the coordinators ensure that the schools' interests are represented, and they keep the schools apprised of the progress of the plan.

3. When a school or schools have a specialized need that is eligible for funds from one or more of the consolidated programs, the planning team may reserve funds for this need. This strategy should be used in a very limited way because it can undermine the comprehensiveness of the district plan and fragment resources.

> **Tip:** The planning team should avoid developing a plan that is a compilation of the improvement plans from each of the schools.

4. When one school has a need that is not reflected in district goals, the planning team may want to help that school find an alternate funding source. Knowing that its program can still be funded makes the school more likely to support the district plan.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After drafting the section on identifying and selecting research-based programs and strategies, the team should review it according to the following checklist.

____ 1. All selected activities and programs align with district goals identified through the needs assessment.

____ 2. Programs and strategies are limited in number and focused to make the best use of resources for maximum impact.

____ 3. The plan describes recommended enhancements and modifications to existing programs, as well as new programs to be implemented.

____ 4. The plan describes whether programs will be implemented throughout the district or at selected schools, or implemented at certain schools on a pilot basis.

____ 5. Selected programs coordinate with and complement one another and integrate with current district initiatives.

____ 6. All recommended programs and enhancements are research-based, and the sources are cited in the plan.

____ 7. The primary features of selected programs are identified and described. Details on instruction, curriculum, and expected results are included.

____ 8. Specific and measurable expected student results are described, and the results align with identified district goals, objectives, and needs.

____ 9. Resources needed to implement the plan (money, materials, equipment, staff) are described in detail and itemized where possible.

____ 10. Links between resources and program activities are clear.

____ 11. Programs for schools with specialized needs that align with the district goals are included, but not to the extent that the comprehensiveness of the district plan is undermined.

If all the items on the list are checked, the team should move on to *Module Six: Professional Development*.

References & Resources

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Identifying & Selecting Research-Based Programs & Strategies

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Identifying & Selecting Research-Based Programs & Strategies

Worksheet 1—Reviewing Current Programs & Strategies

After completing this worksheet for each of the programs related to district goals, the planning team should be able to determine what kinds of programs and program enhancements they need to research.

District Goal ____________________

Program ____________________

1. Where is this program/strategy currently being implemented?

2. How long has this program been in place?

3. What are the strengths of this program?

4. What are the weaknesses of this program?

5. What are the barriers to this programs achieving its desired results?

6. What needs are not being addressed by this program that must be met in order to achieve the district goal?

Recommendations—This program should be

____A. Continued as it currently exists.

____B. Expanded to other schools and grade levels.

____C. Discontinued.

____D. Supported by other programs that address the barriers and needs identified.

____E. Replaced by a new program that will address the goal.

Explanation and qualifying remarks ____________________

____

____

____

Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Worksheet 2—Research Summary

Goal:

Research Question:

Researcher(s):

Summary of Information

Source:

Findings:

Source:

Findings:

Source:

Findings:

Tip: Researchers should use a style manual such as that of the American Psychological Association (APA) to create a bibliographical listing for the source. This information will help if the research material needs to be located again. Also, a bibliographical listing is often required in citing research for programs in plans and proposals, and, at the very least, a well-documented source provides credibility to your research information.

Worksheet 3—Existing Program Enhancement, Modification, Support, or Discontinuance

District Goal:

Current Program:

____ 1. Expand the program to other schools and/or grade levels.

____ 2. Provide additional time and resources for the program.

____ 3. Modify program implementation.

Description of changes:

Research base/Rationale:

Resources needed:

Professional development needed:

____ 4. Select a support program or strategy. (For this choice, read the next section on "Selecting New Programs," and complete **Worksheet 4—Program Description** and **Worksheet 5—Checklist for a Quality Program**, and **Checklist for Program Appropriateness**.)

____ 5. Discontinue the program.
Research base/Rationale:

Worksheet 4—Program Description

1. Program title:

2. District goal(s) addressed by the program:

3. Specific needs addressed by the program:

4. Program description:

5. Expected outcomes:

6. Resources required (money, staff, materials, equipment, other):

7. Scheduling requirements:

8. Instructional and curricular requirements:

9. Professional development needed:

10. Assessment methods:

11. Time line for implementation:

Sources of data or research:

Summary of data or research:

You may wish to answer the following questions:

1. What evidence is there that this program increases student achievement?

2. What features of the program reflect current studies on effective practices and educational issues?

3. What do the studies say about these effective practices and educational issues?

Comments from current users

Contact name:

Position:

School or District:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

MODULE FIVE

Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Worksheet 5—Checklist for a Quality Program

Name of program:

Developer:

____1. The program's projected outcomes are explicit and observable—we know what students will be able to know and do as a result of this program, and how their knowledge and skills can be assessed.

____2. The program developer's explanation of why the program is likely to result in improved student achievement is based on current educational theory and research.

____3. Developers base claims of program success on data collected before and after implementation.

____4. Implementation is fully described and appears to be straightforward and practical.

____5. The program has been successfully implemented in more than one school or district.

____6. The program's cost seems reasonable for services provided and number of students impacted—a cost per pupil calculation often puts the overall cost in perspective.

____7. The program is recommended by current users.

____8. The program is favorably reviewed by the U.S. Department of Education, the state department of education, a research center, or technical assistance facility.

Worksheet 6—Checklist for Program Appropriateness

Name of Program:

____ 1. The program has been successfully implemented in a similar context with documented results on outcomes and positive feedback from school and district staff.

____ 2. The program targets a need (or needs) similar to those in this district.

____ 3. The program aligns with state standards and goals and district mission and goals.

____ 4. The program lends itself to adaptation to this district and schools in the district.

____ 5. The program is likely to impact students with special needs as well as regular students.

____ 6. Implementation requires a manageable amount of school restructuring and professional development.

____ 7. The cost of implementation seems reasonable for expected results.

Worksheet 7—Recommended Program Scope of Implementation Program

1. Schools recommended for implementation:

2. Grade levels recommended for implementation:

3. Groups of students targeted for implementation:

4. Schools recommended for pilot-testing the program:

APPENDIX B

ERIC Clearinghouses & Adjunct Clearinghouses

ERIC Clearinghouses

Each of the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses specializes in a different subject area of education. The clearinghouses acquire significant literature within their particular scope; select the highest quality and most relevant materials; and catalog, index, and abstract them for input into the database. The clearinghouses also provide research summaries, bibliographies, information analysis papers, and many other products and services. Together, the clearinghouses present the most comprehensive source of education information in the country.

Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (CE)

Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210–1090
Toll Free: (800) 848–4815
Phone: (614) 292–4353
Fax: (614) 292–1260
E-mail: ericacve@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu
Web: http://coe.ohio-state.edu/cete/ericacve/index.htm

Addresses all levels and settings of adult and continuing career, and vocational/technical education.

Adult education information spans basic literacy training through professional skill upgrading. Includes resources for experience-based education and career awareness, decision making, development, and change. Also addresses vocational and technical education, including school-to-work, tech prep, technology education, corrections education, employment and training programs, youth employment, work experience programs, education/business partnerships, entrepreneurship, adult retraining, and vocational rehabilitation for individuals with disabilities. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Consumer Education is associated with ERIC/CE.

Assessment and Evaluation (TM)

University of Maryland, College Park
1129 Shriver Lab
Campus Drive
College Park, MD 20742
Toll Free: (800) GO4–ERIC (464–3742)
Phone: (301) 405–7449
Fax: (301) 405–8133
E-mail: eric_ae@cua.edu
Gopher: gopher.cua.edu, Special Resources
Web: http://ericae.net

Includes tests and other measurement devices; methodology of measurement and evaluation; application of tests, measurement, or evaluation in educational projects or programs; research design and methodology in the area of assessment and evaluation; and learning theory. The Adjunct Test Collection Clearinghouse is associated with ERIC/TM.

Community Colleges (JC)

University of California at Los Angeles
3051 Moore Hall
P.O. Box 951521
Los Angeles, CA 90095–1521
Toll Free: (800) 832–8256
Phone: (310) 825–3931
Fax: (310) 206–8095
E-mail: ericcc@ucla.edu
Web: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/ERIC/eric.html

Covers the development, administration, and evaluation of two-year public and private community and junior colleges, technical institutes, and two-year branch university campuses. Provides information on two-year college students, faculty, staff, curricula, programs, support services, libraries, and community services. Includes linkages between two-year colleges and business/industrial organizations and articulation of two-year colleges with secondary and four-year postsecondary institutions. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Entrepreneurship Education is associated with ERIC/JC.

Counseling and Student Services (CG)

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
School of Education
201 Ferguson Building
P.O. Box 26171
Greensboro, NC 27402-6171
Toll Free: (800) 414–9769
Phone: (336) 334–4114
Fax: (336) 334–4116
E-mail: ericcass@uncg.edu
Web: http://www.uncg.edu/~ericcas2

Covers preparation, practice, and supervision of counselors at all educational levels and in all settings; theoretical development of counseling and student services; personnel procedures, such as testing and interviewing, and the analysis and dissemination of the resultant information; group and case work; the nature of student and adult characteristics; and personnel workers and their relation to career planning, family consultations, and student orientation activities.

Disabilities and Gifted Education (EC)

Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191–1589
Toll Free: (800) 328–0272
Phone: (703) 264–9474
TTY: (703) 264–9449
Fax: (703) 620–2521
E-mail: ericec@cec.sped.org
Web: http://www.cec.sped.org/ericec.htm

Scope includes all aspects of the education and development of people with disabilities and those who are gifted, including identification, assessment, and intervention and enrichment in special settings and in the mainstream. Includes learning, developmental, and physical disabilities; behavior and emotional disorders; mental retardation; and outstanding intellectual or creative ability in any area of achievement. Encompasses populations that are at risk (abused or medically fragile), low incidence, adjudicated, culturally and linguistically diverse, economically disadvantaged, or geographically isolated.

Covers referral, student evaluation, early intervention programs, inclusion, social integration, individualized education programs, individualized family service plans, school-to-work transition, and vocational and lifelong education. Addresses employment, rehabilitation, applications of technology, physical accessibility, differentiated curriculum, acceleration, and leadership development.

Educational Management (EA)

5207 University of Oregon
1787 Agate Street
Eugene, OR 97403–5207
Toll Free: (800) 438–8841
Phone: (541) 346–1684
Fax: (541) 346–2334
E-mail: ppiele@oregon.uoregon.edu
Web: http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ericcem

Covers the leadership, management, and structure of public and private education organizations at elementary and secondary school levels; the practice and theory of administration; federal, state, and local education law, policymaking, and governance; the preservice and inservice preparation of administrators; administrative tasks and processes, including planning, financing, and staffing education organizations; methods and varieties of organization, including organizational change and improvement; school-community relationships; and the social context of education organizations.

Elementary and Early Childhood Education (PS)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820–7469
Toll Free: (800) 583–4135 (Voice and TTY)

Phone: (217) 333–1386
Fax: (217) 333–3767
E-mail: ericeece@uiuc.edu
Web:
http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/ericeece.html (ERIC/PS)
http://npin.org (National Parent Information Network)

This clearinghouse addresses the physical, cognitive, social, educational, and cultural development of children from birth through early adolescence; prenatal factors; parents, parenting, and family relationships that relate to education; learning theory research and practice related to the development of young children, including the preparation of teachers for this educational level; interdisciplinary curriculum and mixed-age teaching and learning; educational, social, and cultural programs and services for children; the child in the context of the family and the family in the context of society; and theoretical and philosophical issues pertaining to children's development and education. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for Child Care is associated with ERIC/PS.

Higher Education (HE)

George Washington University
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 630
Washington, DC 20036–1183
Toll Free: (800) 773–3742
Phone: (202) 296–2597
Fax: (202) 452–1844
E-mail: eriche@eric-he.edu
Web: http://www.gwu.edu/~eriche

Topics include college and university conditions, problems, programs, and students; curricular and instructional programs; and institutional research at the college or university level. Also covers federal programs, professional education (medicine, law, etc.), professional continuing education, collegiate computer-assisted learning and management, graduate education, university extension programs, teaching and learning, legal issues and legislation, planning, governance, finance, evaluation, interinstitutional arrangements, management of institutions of higher education, and business or industry educational programs leading to a degree. The National TRIO Clearinghouse is associated with ERIC/HE.

Information & Technology (IT)

Syracuse University
4–194 Center for Science and Technology
Syracuse, NY 13244–4100
Toll Free: (800) 464–9107
Phone: (315) 443–3640
Fax: (315) 443–5448
E-mail: eric@ericir.syr.edu; askeric@askeric.org
Web:
http://ericir.syr.edu/ithome (ERIC/IT)
http://www.askeric.org (AskERIC)

Scope includes educational technology and library and information science at all levels, including instructional design, development, and evaluation within educational technology; and the media of educational communication: computers and microcomputers, telecommunications, audio and video recordings, film, and other audiovisual materials as they pertain to teaching and learning. The focus is on the operation and management of information services for education-related organizations. Includes all aspects of information technology related to education.

Languages and Linguistics (FL)

Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037–1214
Toll Free: (800) 276–9834
Phone: (202) 429–9292
Fax: (202) 659–5641
E-mail: eric@cal.org
Web: http://www.cal.org/ericcll

Covers languages and language sciences: all aspects of second language instruction and learning in all commonly and rarely taught languages, including English as a second language. Includes bilingualism and bilingual education, as well as cultural education in the context of second language learning (including intercultural communication, study abroad, and international education exchange). Encompasses all areas of linguistics, including theoretical and applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education is associated with ERIC/FL.

Reading, English, and Communication (CS)

Indiana University
Smith Research Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 759–4723
Phone: (812) 855–5847
Fax: (812) 855–4220
E-mail: ericcs@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec

Comprises reading, English, and communication (verbal and nonverbal), preschool through college; educational research and instruction development in reading, writing, speaking, and listening; identification, diagnosis, and remediation of reading problems; and speech communication (including forensics), mass communication, interpersonal and small group interaction, interpretation, rhetorical and communication theory, speech sciences, and theater. Covers preparation of instructional staff and related personnel. All aspects of reading behavior are included, with an emphasis on physiology, psychology, sociology, and teaching; instructional materials, curricula, tests/measurement, and methodology at all levels of reading; the role of libraries and other agencies in fostering and guiding reading; and diagnostics and remedial reading services in schools and clinical settings. Also covers preparation of reading teachers and specialists and includes guidelines in these subject areas for related agencies and for parents.

Rural Education and Small Schools (RC)

Appalachia Educational Laboratory
1031 Quarrier Street
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325–1348
Toll Free: (800) 624–9120
Phone: (304) 347–0400
TTY: (304) 347–0401
Fax: (304) 347–0487
E-mail: lanhamb@ael.org
Web: http://aelvira.ael.org/erichp.htm

Scope includes programs; practices; and economic, cultural, social, or other factors related to education for rural residents, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Mexican Americans, and migrants; educational practices and programs in all small schools; and outdoor and experiential education.

Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education (SE)

Ohio State University
1929 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210–1080
Toll Free: (800) 276–0462
Phone: (614) 292–6717
Fax: (614) 292–0263
E-mail: ericse@osu.edu
Gopher: gopher.ericse.ohio-state.edu
Web: http://www.ericse.org

Covers science, mathematics, and environmental education at all levels, including the development of curriculum and instruction materials; teachers and teacher education; learning theory and outcomes (including the impact of parameters such as interest level, intelligence, values, and concept development on learning in these fields); educational programs; research and evaluative studies; media applications; and computer applications.

Social Studies/Social Science Education (SO)

Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
Fax: (812) 855–0455
E-mail: ericso@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~ssdc/eric_chess.htm

Covers all levels of social studies and social science education; the contributions of history, geography, and other social science disciplines; applications of theory and research to social science education; education as a social science; comparative education (K–12); and content and curriculum materials on such social topics as law-related education, ethnic studies, bias and discrimination, aging, and women's equity. Music and art education are also covered. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for International Civic Education, the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for Law-Related Education, the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Service Learning, and the National Clearinghouse for U.S.-Japan Studies are all associated with ERIC/SO.

Teaching and Teacher Education (SP)

American Association of Colleges
for Teacher Education
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 610
Washington, DC 20036–1186
Toll Free: (800) 822–9229
Phone: (202) 293–2450
Fax: (202) 457–8095
E-mail: ericsp@inet.ed.gov
Web: http://www.ericsp.org

Covers school personnel issues at all levels, including teacher recruitment, selection, licensing, certification, training, preservice and inservice preparation, evaluation, retention, and retirement; the theory, philosophy, and practice of teaching; curricula and general education not specifically covered by other clearinghouses; and organization, administration, finance, and legal issues relating to teacher education programs and institutions. Also covers all aspects of health, physical, recreation, and dance education. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Clinical Schools is associated with ERIC/SP.

Urban Education (UD)

Teachers College, Columbia University
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Main Hall, Room 303, Box 40
New York, NY 10027–6696
Toll Free: (800) 601–4868
Phone: (212) 678–3433
Fax: (212) 678–4012
E-mail: eric-cue@columbia.edu
Web: http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

Covers programs and practices in public, parochial, and private schools in urban areas and the education of particular racial and ethnic minority children and youth in various settings—local, national, and international; the theory and practice of educational equity; urban and minority experiences; and urban and minority social institutions and services.

Adjunct Clearinghouses

Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses are associated with the ERIC Clearinghouse whose scope overlaps the narrower scope of the adjunct. Each adjunct identifies and acquires significant literature within its scope area. The clearinghouse with which the adjunct is associated then catalogs, indexes, and abstracts the documents for inclusion in the ERIC database. Like the larger clearinghouses, the adjuncts provide free reference and referral services in their subject areas.

Child Care

National Child Care Information Center
301 Maple Avenue West, Suite 602
Vienna, VA 22180
Toll Free: (800) 616–2242
Fax: (800) 716–2242
E-mail: agoldstein@acf.dhhs.gov
Web: http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/nccic/nccichome.html

Covers all areas of child care information; current research; acquisition of documents; listings and abstracts of publications and resources; and the development of electronic child care information resources for the World Wide Web.

Clinical Schools

American Association of Colleges
for Teacher Education
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 610
Washington, DC 20036–1186
Toll Free: (800) 822–9229
Phone: (202) 293–2450

Fax: (202) 457–8095
E-mail: iabdalha@inet.ed.gov
Web: http://www.aacte.org/menu2.html

Provides information on clinical schools, professional development schools, professional practice schools, and similar institutions; acquires, abstracts, and processes literature on clinical schools for the ERIC database; produces bibliographies, periodic papers, digests, and other materials on issues related to clinical schools; and conducts research on clinical schools.

Consumer Education

National Institute for Consumer Education
Eastern Michigan University
207 Rackham Building
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Phone: (313) 487–2292
Fax: (313) 487–7153
E-mail: Rosella.Bannister@emich.edu
Web: http://www.emich.edu/public/coe/nice

Includes consumer and personal finance education throughout the life cycle; examines decision making, problem solving, value and goal identification, acquisition of resources, activities in spending and borrowing, savings and investments, protection of resources (for example, using insurance and conservation), purchases of goods and services, rights and responsibilities, laws and regulations, and consumer assistance and advocacy within economic, political, and social contexts.

Entrepreneurship Education

Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4900 Oak Street
Kansas City, MO 64112–2776
Toll Free: (888) 423–5233
Phone: (310) 206–9549
Fax: (310) 206–8095
E-mail: celcee@ucla.edu
Web: http://www.celcee.edu

Provides information on all aspects of entrepreneurship education at every level—including K–12, postsecondary, and nonprofit and corporate organizations—as well as programs for small business development; acquires, abstracts, and processes materials on entrepreneurship education for posting to the adjunct's Website (http://www.celcee.edu); and forwards appropriate materials to ERIC for entry into that database.

ESL Literacy Education

Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037–1214
Phone: (202) 429–9292, Extension 200
Fax: (202) 659–5641
E-mail: ncle@cal.org
Web: http://www.cal.org/ncle

Covers all aspects of literacy education for adults and out-of-school youth with limited English proficiency (LEP). Specific topics covered include development of reading, writing, computational, and communication skills; programs and projects in employment or in occupational or vocational training; workplace literacy programs; family literacy programs; intergenerational literacy programs; program design, development, implementation, and evaluation; outreach, including student assessment and placement; teaching methods, approaches, and techniques; technologies in the teaching of LEP adults; training and resource materials for teachers, instructors, and volunteers; training of trainers; student curricular materials; learning styles; cross-cultural considerations in literacy education; English as a second language for LEP adults; native language literacy for LEP adults; research on second language literacy; and citizenship instruction for LEP adults.

International Civic Education

Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
Fax: (812) 855–0455
E-mail: patrick@indiana.edu

Covers all aspects of civic education in countries around the world, with an emphasis on the principles and practices of democracy in citizenship education and comparative education for democratic citizenship.

Law-Related Education

Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
Fax: (812) 855–0455
E-mail: ericso@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~ssdc/lre.html

Covers all areas of law-related education, including citizenship education, the U.S. Constitution, the law, legal issues, and the Bill of Rights.

Service Learning

University of Minnesota
College of Education and Human Development
1954 Buford Avenue, Room R–460
St. Paul, MN 55108
Toll Free: (800) 808–SERV (808–7378)
Phone: (612) 625–6276
Fax: (612) 625–6277
E-mail: serv@maroon.tc.umn.edu
Gopher: gopher.nicsl.coled.umn.edu
Web: http://www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu

Covers all areas of service learning that connect community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility.

Test Collection

Educational Testing Service
Princeton, NJ 08541
Phone: (609) 734–5737
Fax: (609) 683–7186
E-mail: mhalpern@ets.org
Gopher: gopher.cua.edu, Special Resources
Web: http://ericae.net/testcol.htm

Prepares descriptions of commercially available and noncommercially available tests, checklists, instruments, questionnaires, and other assessment and evaluation tools.

TRIO Clearinghouse

1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 347–2218
Fax: (202) 347-0786
E-mail: clearinghouse@hq.nceoa.org
Web: http://www.trioprograms.org

Covers all areas of higher education access for first generation, low-income, and disabled students. Also refers to retention and recruitment issues for these same groups of students in postsecondary education. Terms and concepts associated with this adjunct clearinghouse include Upward Bound, Talent Search, Educational Opportunities Centers, Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement, low-income groups, poverty programs, educational opportunity, access to education, equal education, nondiscriminatory education, recruitment, and retention.

U.S.–Japan Studies

Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
Fax: (812) 855–0455
E-mail: japan@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~japan

Covers all aspects of teaching and learning about Japanese society and culture, including economics, language training, politics, and U.S.–Japan relations.

APPENDIX C

Organizations

Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers (CC)

Region I

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

New England Comprehensive Assistance Center
Wende Allen, Director
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02158-1069
Phone: (617) 618-2533
Fax: (617) 965-6325
E-mail: wallen@edc.org
Website: http://www.edc.org/NECAC/

Region II

New York State

New York Technical Assistance Center (NYTAC)
LaMar P. Miller, Executive Director
New York University
82 Washington Square East, Suite 72
New York, NY 10003
Phone: (800) 469-8224
Fax: (212) 995-4199
E-mail: lamar.miller@nyu.edu
Website: http://www.nyc.edu/education/metrocenter

Region III

Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania

Region III Comprehensive Center
Charlene Rivera, Director
Center for Equity & Excellence in Education
The George Washington University
1730 N. Lynn Street, Suite 401
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (703) 528-3588
Fax: (703) 528-5973
E-mail: crivera@ceee.gwu.edu
Website: http://ceee.guw.edu/

Region IV

Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia

Region IV Comprehensive Center
Pam Buckley, Director
AEL-Arlington
1700 N. Moore Street
Suite 1275
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (800) 624-9120
Fax: (703) 276-0266
E-mail: aelinfo@ael.org
Website: http://www.ael.org

Federal Resource Center for Special Education, Academy for Educational Development, (1998). Resource list of selected service providers funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: Author. (Disseminated at the 1998 Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools)

Region V

Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi

Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center
Dr. Hai T. Tran, Director
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
3330 N. Causeway Boulevard, Suite 430
Metairie, LA 70002-3573
Phone: (504) 838-6861 or (800) 644-8671
Fax: (504) 831-5242

E-mail: htran@sedl.org
Website: http://www.sedl.org/secac/

Region VI

Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin

Comprehensive Center- Region VI
Walter G. Secada, Director
Wisconsin Center for Education Research
University of Wisconsin
1025 W. Johnson Street, TEB
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 263-4220 or (888) 862-7763
Fax: (608) 263-3733
E-mail: ccvi@macc.wisc.edu
Website: http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/ccvi

Region VII

Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma

Region VII Comprehensive Center
John E. Steffens, Executive Director
Belinda Biscoe, Director
University of Oklahoma
555 E. Constitution Street
Norman, OK 73072-7820
Phone: (405) 325-1729 or (800) 228-1766
Fax: (405) 325-1824
E-mail: regionvii@ou.edu
Website: http://www.region7@ou.edu

Region VIII

Texas

STAR Center
Maria Robledo Montecel, Executive Director
Albert Cortez, Site Director
Intercultural Development Research Association
5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228-1190
Phone: (210) 684-8180 or (888) 394-7827
Fax: (210) 684-5389
E-mail: idra@idra.org
Website: http://www.idra.org

Region IX

Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah

Southwest Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center
Paul E. Martinez, Director
New Mexico Highlands University
1700 Grande Court, Suite 101
Rio Rancho, NM 87124
Phone: (505) 891-6111 or (800) 247-4269
Fax: (505) 891-5744
Website: http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu

Region X

Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming

Northwest Regional Education Laboratory
Comprehensive Center
Carlos Sundermann, Director
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 Southwest Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: (503) 275-0653 or (800) 547-6339 x653
Fax: (503) 275-9625
E-mail: sundermc@nwrel.org
Website: http://www.nwrac.org

Region XI

Northern California

Comprehensive Assistance Center WestEd
Beverly Farr, Director
730 Harrison Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1242
Phone: (415) 565-3009 or (800) 64-LEARN
Fax: (415) 565-3012
E-mail: bfarr@wested.org
Website: http://www.wested./org/cc

Region XII

Southern California

Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center
Henry Mothner, Director
Los Angeles County Office Education
9300 Imperial Highway
Downey, CA 90242-2890
Phone: (562) 922-6343

Fax: (562) 946-1998
E-mail: mothner henry@lacoe.edu
Website: http://sccac.lacoe.edu

Region XIII

Alaska

Alaska Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center
Linda Layfield, Director
South East Regional Resource Center
210 Ferry Way, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 586-6806
Fax: (907) 463-3811
E-mail: lindal@akrac.k12.ak.us
Website: http://www.akrac.k12.ak.us

Region XIV

Florida, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

Comprehensive Assistance Center
Trudy Hensley, Director
Educational Testing Service
1979 Lake Side Parkway, Suite 400
Tucker, GA 30084
Phone: (800) 241-3865
Fax: (404) 723-7436
E-mail: thensley@ets.org
Website: http://www.ets.org/ccxiv

Region XV

American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau

Pacific Center
Hilda C. Heine, Program Director
Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
1099 Alakea Street, 25th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 533-6000
Fax: (808) 533-7599
E-mail: askprel@prel.hawaii.edu
Website: http://www.prel.hawaii.edu

Eisenhower Regional Consortia for Mathematics and Science Education

Appalachia Region

Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia

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MODULE FIVE

5

Region IV
Comprehensive

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE SIX

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

PLANNING
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Region IV
Comprehensive
at AEL

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SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

6 PLANNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE SIX

Making Resources Matter

Published by

SERVE

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About Module Six

Module Six describes a step-by-step process for developing a district professional development plan.

Step One: Assess professional development needs.

Step Two: Prioritize topics for professional development.

Step Three: Examine effective professional development concepts and models.

Step Four: Select professional development activities.

Step Five: Share the professional development plan.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to professional development for teachers. The module provides information and recommendations that reflect current research. Examples illustrate effective professional development planning strategies.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While the worksheets may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness for *Module Seven.*

Planning Professional Development

The following describes a conversation between two teachers who had very different professional development experiences. Anna teaches social studies at a middle school. Wayne teaches at an elementary school that serves the same neighborhood.

Anna explained her excitement about being involved in a series of professional development activities that seemed to be making a difference in her teaching and her students' learning. Anna described how the faculty chose their own topics to study, topics that reflected areas of student achievement that were schoolwide concerns. She and her fellow teachers spent a lot of time up front researching strategies and practices that were proven to produce the results they wanted for their students. They attended training in teams, and team members supported one another as they implemented new practices.

Wayne thought about the professional development activities he attended and how dull and ineffective they seemed compared to what Anna was describing. He pulled a flyer from his mailbox on the first day of pre-planning and selected a couple of sessions to attend. The presenter had been enthusiastic and even included activities that could be described as "hands-on and practical." Wayne took a few notes and picked up a set of handouts, but when he returned to school, he decided to wait until he got the students into a routine before experimenting with new strategies. He soon found he had forgotten almost everything he heard at the workshops. With no one to talk to about how he could get started, he decided to continue with the strategies he had always used.

Anna's principal rearranged the school schedule to provide more time for the teams to plan together and to exchange ideas about the new strategies. The best part, Anna said, was the feeling of collegiality. The relationships among teachers at her school had never been better. Working together on important aspects of teaching and learning made them feel a level of professionalism that was more motivating than any afternoon session with a motivational speaker.

(Collins, 1997, p. xiii)

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MODULE SIX

In this module, the planning team will

- Assess professional development needs
- Examine the characteristics of effective professional development
- Explore professional development models that foster long-term, continuous improvement
- Plan a professional development program that aligns with district goals

Expected Outcomes

- The district will have a professional development plan that responds to the goals and objectives of the consolidated plan.
- Teachers can expect ongoing support and growth.
- Professional development activities that incorporate features of effective professional development will be selected.

Basic Premises

Effective professional development

- Is an ongoing, growth-promoting learning process focusing on student learning/achievement and teacher capacity with the goal of improving the educational environment
- Is based on the best available research, and addresses teachers' responsibilities in curriculum, instruction, student learning, and all other areas
- Includes activities that are intellectually challenging, build on educators' skills and content knowledge, contribute to the school community, and result in improvements in teaching practice
- Supports programs and strategies selected to increase student achievement in identified areas of need
- Occurs in a variety of formats

The local consolidated plan must include "a description of the strategy the local education agency will use to provide professional development for teachers, and, where appropriate, pupil services personnel, administrators, parents and other staff, including local education staff."

IASA, Title I, Part A, Section 1112 (b) (3)

What is Professional Development?

The professional development process links to the goals and objectives of the consolidated plan. It addresses the overall goal of improved student achievement through a variety of activities designed to increase educators' knowledge of research-based practices and to improve their teaching skills.

A highly successful school system in Westside, Nebraska, has been recognized for a strong professional development program that is integral to its strategic plan and includes everyone in the system. According to Sparks and Hirsh (1997), the Westside community school system defines *professional development* as "an ongoing, job-related program designed to enhance, maintain, and refine competencies for all staff. It is guided by the beliefs that staff development is an essential component of school improvement and that its ultimate goal is increased student success" (p. 28).

Professional Development and the Consolidated Plan

Schools and school systems have been soundly criticized for taking a fragmented approach to change such reform efforts have typically been based on the latest new idea from a sister district or the most recent article in a favorite professional journal. Disjointed approaches to professional development do not fit with overall reform efforts, nor do they have the support of the very people who must implement the new strategies.

Effective planning, whether strategic, comprehensive, or consolidated, requires a move away from one-shot workshops and toward a well-thought-out, systematic approach to professional development that is formulated by a broad-based district team. According to Sparks and Hirsh,

> A clear, compelling mission statement and measurable objectives make up the core of the plan. The mission and objectives, in turn, guide staff development activities that will best serve district and school goals. This comprehensive approach to change assures that all aspects of the system—for example, policy, assessment, curriculum, instruction, parent involvement—are working together with staff development toward the achievement of a manageable set of student outcomes that the entire system values. (p. 24)

Under these circumstances, professional development is one mean by which districts achieve their goals rather than being a goal in and of itself. Further, school systems must understand that bringing about change is a long-term process requiring sustained focus on student achievement.

Planning Professional Development

> In the past few years, as a result of the movement to results-driven education and school-focused staff development, planning processes more often begin by determining the things students need to know and be able to do and then working backward to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of educators if those student outcomes are to be realized. Staff development then focuses on the gap between the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes and those currently possessed by staff members. (Sparks and Hirsh, p. 41)

The Steps of Planning Professional Development

Step One

Assess Professional Development Needs

The first step in planning for effective development is conducting a needs assessment to determine the gap between what teachers and administrators know and what they need to know to teach students to their district's high standards. In the same way that we measure student abilities against a set of standards, we must measure teachers' abilities against standards for effective teaching. When teachers are not equipped to teach what students need to know, they must have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. Focusing on the gap analysis places professional development in the larger context of the district's consolidated plan.

Conducting a teacher self-assessment of professional development needs. The needs assessment begins with teacher self-assessment. Teachers reflect on important aspects of their work to judge

- What they know and believe about teaching and learning
- The competencies they hold and how well they perform them
- Their roles and relationships as members of the teaching profession
- The impact of their teaching on students and student achievement

(Collins, p. 39)

According to Duke (1994), "Needs identified through teachers' efforts to understand and improve their own practice bring out the deepest commitment to change and the most meaningful participation in professional development activities." Richard Boyatzis' Self-Directed Teacher Change Model (1982) identifies topics and objectives for professional development activities. An adaptation of this model (Collins, 1997) suggests that teachers do the following to assess their professional development needs.

1. Review classroom practices in comparison to ideal practices and select certain instructional practices on which to focus.
2. Research those ideal practices in order to develop criteria for judging current practices.
3. Collect information about current classroom practices through such means as surveys, self-reporting checklists, analyses of videotapes of actual teaching sessions, observation records, and student achievement data.
4. Compare current classroom practices to the ideal practices; analyze what is actually happening in the classroom against the standards or criteria associated with ideal practices; and identify points where actual practices differ from the ideal.
5. Use the discrepancy between actual and ideal to provide the focus for professional development activities. (p.153)

Linking professional development to district priority needs, goals, and selected strategies. Professional development should be linked to the priorities identified in the district comprehensive needs assessment and to programs and strategies selected

Example of Worksheet 1

Topics Identified through Analysis of Student Achievement Data	Topics Identified through Analysis of District and School Improvement Goals and Strategies Selected to Achieve These Goals	Topics Identified through Teacher Self-Assessment
Reading comprehension	To improve student achievement in reading by June 30, 1999; strategies selected—Reading Recovery, reading across the curriculum, university courses on teaching reading	Strategies for teaching reading to at-risk students
Reading vocabulary		Strategies for assessment that pinpoint student needs
Application of math concepts and skills in problem-solving	To improve students' ability to apply math concepts by June 30, 1999; to improve student achievement in math by June 30, 1999; strategies selected—hands-on, inquiry-based instructional strategies for math and science, Family Math	Strategies for using math manipulatives
Math computation skills		

to meet these priority needs. The planning team should review these programs and strategies in conjunction with the needs and interests identified by the teachers to determine the most comprehensive approach to professional development.

Ultimately, teacher self-assessments, student achievement data, district goals, and school improvement goals must be jointly considered in an effort to create an integrated professional development plan.

Worksheet 1—Connecting Professional Development Needs to Student Achievement enables the planning team to record and compare data on professional development needs from various sources. (Copies of all worksheets are included in *Appendix A*.)

Example of Worksheet 1 Continued

Topics Identified through Analysis of Student Achievement Data	Topics Identified through Analysis of District and School Improvement Goals and Strategies Selected to Achieve These Goal	Topics Identified through Teacher Self-Assessment
Continuity and consistency of math skills instruction across grade levels	To improve students' ability to apply math skills to problem-solving situations by June 30, 1999; strategies selected—Math in Your World Program	Teaching for application
	To reduce the numbers of grade 3-6 students testing below the state average in math by 20% by the end of the 1998-99 school year; strategies selected—after-school enrichment and tutoring program	Teaching basic math skills for elementary teachers
Application of scientific concepts	To create continuity and consistency of science skills instruction across grade levels; strategies selected—Program for Active Learning in Science (PALS)	Content knowledge in science and math
	To reduce incidences of classroom disruption by June 30, 1999; strategies selected—development of districtwide discipline plan	Classroom management techniques
		Use of technology

Step Two

Prioritize Topics for Professional Development

After the team completes **Worksheet 1**, they should identify topics that appear most frequently across all three lists. Priority topics for professional development are those that are mentioned several times or topics that can be clustered around an area of need.

The example below, adapted from Collins' work, shows how one school prioritized its professional development needs using the method described above.

Worksheet 1 indicates that instructional strategies in reading and math and content knowledge in science are high-priority professional development needs because these topics were identified in all three columns. The planning team selected these topics as areas of primary focus in its professional development plan for the district. The worksheet also identified classroom management as a topic. Because classroom management impacts instructional strategies, the team also included it as a priority.

Step Three

Examine Effective Professional Development Concepts and Models

There are almost as many ideas about what makes a good professional development program as there are persons interested in participating in training activities. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) (1995) developed standards for professional development that have been widely accepted and are in use in school systems across the country. These standards, adapted for use in this module, are presented in *Table 1* (on the following page).

In addition to the standards approved by NSDC, much research has been done to identify the characteristics of effective staff development programs. Gall and Vojtek (1996) list no fewer than 16 characteristics of such programs, including scheduling, site selection, and complexity of the objectives. The following characteristics included from this list are particularly relevant to developing a district professional development plan.

Effective professional development should be

- **Systemic**—A part of the organization of schools.
- **Shared**—The responsibility of teachers, schools, and districts.
- **Related**—Determined by the needs of students AND teachers.
- **Linked**—Tied to the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.
- **Supported**—Endorsed by administrators and appropriately funded.
- **Measured**—Evaluated to determine the effectiveness of various strategies.

Effective activities for adults

- **Address current needs**—They are directed at solving current job-related problems.
- **Involve participants in their own learning**—They allow participants to select content and processes for learning.
- **Recognize the expertise of participants**—They allow participants to contribute their current knowledge to the learning process.
- **Offer opportunities for interaction among participants**—They involve participants in solving problems that represent collective concerns.
- **Challenge learners**—They charge participants with learning new, complex tasks.
- **Provide support**—They ensure that new learning is supported and enhanced through coaching, study teams, and peer observations.

Tip: The team may want to identify the characteristics of effective professional development they have experienced and incorporate them into the professional development plan.

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Table 1

National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development

Context

Effective staff development…

- Requires and fosters the norm of continuous improvement
- Requires strong leadership in order to obtain continuing support and to motivate all staff, school board members, parents, and the community to be advocates for continuous improvement
- Is aligned with the school's and the district's strategic plan and is funded by a line item in the budget
- Provides adequate time during the work day for staff members to learn and work together to accomplish the school's mission and goals
- Is an innovation in itself that requires study of the change process

Process

Effective staff development…

- Provides knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding organization development and systems thinking
- Is based on knowledge about human learning and development
- Provides for the three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization
- Bases priorities on a careful analysis of disaggregated student data regarding goals for student learning
- Uses content that has proven value in increasing student learning and development
- Provides a framework for integrating innovations and relating those innovations to the mission of the organization
- Requires an evaluation process that is ongoing, includes multiple sources of information, and focuses on all levels of the organization
- Uses a variety of staff development approaches to accomplish the goals of improving instruction and student success
- Provides the follow-up necessary to ensure improvement
- Requires staff members to learn and apply collaborative skills to conduct meetings, make shared decisions, solve problems, and work collegially
- Requires knowledge and use of the stages of group development to build effective, productive, collegial teams

Content

Effective staff development…

- Increases administrators' and teachers' understanding of how to provide school environments and instruction that are responsive to the developmental needs of children, young adolescents, and adolescents
- Facilitates the development and implementation of school and classroom-based management which maximize student learning
- Addresses diversity by providing awareness and training related to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to ensure that an equitable and quality education is provided to all students
- Enables educators to provide a challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum that engages students in integrative ways of thinking and learning
- Prepares teachers to use research-based teaching strategies appropriate to their instructional objectives and their students
- Prepares educators to demonstrate high expectations for student learning
- Facilitates staff collaboration with and support of families for improving student performance
- Prepares teachers to use various types of performance assessment in their classrooms
- Prepares educators to combine academic student-learning goals with service to the community
- Increases administrators' and teachers' ability to provide guidance and advice to students
- Increases staff knowledge and practice of interdisciplinary team organization and instruction

MODULE SIX

Models for Professional Development

Effective models for professional development include a range of learning opportunities. These learning opportunities must be accompanied by the support of administrators, the provision of funds, and the allotment of time for teachers to participate.

Some of the most typical models of professional development are

- Training
- Individually-guided inquiry and problem solving, sometimes called action research
- Peer observation
- Curriculum development and school improvement
- Peer planning coaching
- Collegial collaboration

Descriptions of these models follow.

Training

Training is the most common form of professional development in educational settings. However, Joyce and Showers (1995) suggest that the extent of training makes a significant impact on how teachers use their new learning. According to this model, workshops must include

- **Theory**—Presenting research that supports the new practices.
- **Demonstration**—Modeling how the theory applies to teaching behavior.
- **Practice**—Giving participants opportunities to practice new skills in the workshop setting.
- **Support**—Planning a peer support system, which will encourage teachers to help one another as they learn to apply their new knowledge to the classroom.
- **Coaching**—Establishing a support system in which peers conduct classroom observation as teachers begin using new skills. The training should include coaching/technical assistance to teachers as they begin using their new learning in the classroom.
- **Evaluation**—Conducting follow-up for the training that includes a process to determine to what extent teachers are applying what they learned. This evaluation may identify the need for further training or a meeting of the participants to share ideas and discuss difficulties.

Individually-Guided Inquiry and Problem Solving

Many motivated teachers are regularly involved in individually-guided professional development. They identify an area of interest and conduct research or other activities to learn more about it. Study groups are an effective format for this type of professional development activity. Administrators need to support this type of activity by providing time and opportunities for teachers to meet.

Effective individually-guided professional development includes

Identified Need—Unlike a perceived need in which the teacher thinks or feels the need exists, an identified need is based on data.

A Plan—Teachers develop a plan that details how the study will proceed, what activities will be conducted to address the identified need, and what changes are expected in student learning or teacher practices and beliefs.

This plan will structure the individually-guided work.

The plan should be shared with a supervisor or administrator so time expended outside the classroom can be credited.

Tip: Sharing the plan with a supervisor ensures support and recognition for the effort.

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Learning Activities—Diverse activities, such as participating in training, reviewing current research, collecting and analyzing data, self-study, and observation can be built into the plan. The individual or study group may choose to experiment with new ideas in a structured way or perform controlled studies to explore possible solutions to problems. All research and data collection should be scientific and comprehensive.

> **Tip:** One benefit of individually-guided study is that teachers can choose learning activities that best suit the topic and context.

Evaluation—Determining whether the individually-guided study impacts student learning or teacher performance is as necessary to this form of professional development as to any other. Teachers can conduct their own process evaluation, assessing themselves regularly to determine if they are using and refining their new knowledge and skills.

> **Tip:** Results of an inquiry project should be shared with all faculty and staff. Not only does this allow others to benefit from the work of the individual or study group, but it allows a school and district to recognize experts in "their own backyard."

Peer Observation

Many teachers have had the experience of being observed in the classroom, usually for purposes of evaluation. Less frequently, observation is used to identify areas in which a teacher needs to strengthen skills. An especially effective observer is another colleague who teaches the same subject or the same grade level. Colleagues may observe each other and then work together to develop an action plan for improving particular skills. This form of professional development requires that the teacher trust the observer and the observation process.

Effective Observation/Assessment includes

Pre-Observation Conference—The teacher and observer must agree on the purpose of the observation, when it will take place, what information will be recorded, and how it will be used.

> **Tip:** Providing an outline of the lesson will allow the observer to focus on recording the desired information.

Post-Observation Conference—The teacher and the observer work together to analyze and interpret the information recorded during the observation.

Action Plan—The observation results in an individual or team professional development plan that focuses on specific areas for growth.

Curriculum Development and School Improvement Planning

Developing a new curriculum or school improvement plan is not traditionally considered professional development. However, curriculum development and school improvement planning require exploration, research, and a study of the important elements of teaching and learning. Participation in this work not only increases the capacity of the individuals involved but of other faculty with whom the research is shared.

Effective curriculum development and school improvement planning include

Identified Needs—This work should focus on needs identified through a data-based needs assessment. The planning team should ask other teachers, staff, and parents who have knowledge and skills related to the identified needs to join the team or to work as a study group or subcommittee to research and plan ways to address the needs.

Action Plan—A plan of action should present new skills and knowledge necessary to address the problems or needs and strategies for how they will be acquired. The plan should be research-based and include data to support its potential effectiveness.

Sharing and Implementation of the Plan—The team should share their plan with all who will be implementing it, and work with faculty and administrators to ensure that adequate time and resources are provided.

Linkage—All professional development efforts should be tied to other activities and programs to help faculty and staff see individual initiatives as part of the whole school improvement process.

Peer Coaching

When teachers apply new skills and knowledge, they need continual assistance. This means teachers interacting with one another to reinforce what they've learned. Guskey (1990) explains that for most teachers, the first year of implementing change is one of trial and experimentation. Without extra support, teachers will become frustrated and abandon new strategies. Collins (1997) advocates peer coaching. As teachers watch their colleagues in the classroom, they mentally rehearse the model that was presented during training and compare it to what they see. This process both reinforces the initial training and allows teachers to discuss contextual issues that arise during real-life application. Research shows that teachers who participate in peer coaching practice new skills more frequently and persist in using them through the difficult, early stages of putting new skills into use (p. 96).

Collegial Collaboration

One of the simplest and most overlooked types of professional development is collegial collaboration. Collegial collaboration may include such activities as developing instructional units together, routinely sharing successful strategies in a discussion format, and developing solutions to problems that cut across grades and content areas. The interactions among collaborating teachers involve (1) a sharing of responsibilities for tasks related to teaching and/or the improvement of teaching, (2) a willingness to expose one's teaching performance as well as one's beliefs about teaching and learning to the scrutiny of others, and (3) collective action. Collins (1997) explains

> Collaboration promotes a norm of continual improvement. Reflecting on current practice and seeking ways to do things better creates a culture that sees planned change as an expectation of the professional staff. It helps you view change as a never-ending process. You can see improvement as a journey, not a destination. (p. 100)

Professional development activities should not be offered only to teachers. Including parents, support staff, and community members when appropriate increases their understanding and support for educational programs and teacher skills. They'll be more likely to become meaningfully involved in education.

Step Four

Select Professional Development Activities

Numerous activities can support professional development. The key to selection is to match desired outcomes with appropriate activities, that is, those activities that research shows help teachers and other educators improve their skills. The chart in *Table 2* (pp. 14-15) shows the effectiveness of several types of professional development activities certain outcomes. *Table 2* may assist teams in selecting activities that meet the professional development of needs in the district.

Assessing Appropriateness and Potential Effectiveness of a Professional Development Program

The planning team may choose to develop a professional development program for the district—a home-grown model—or it may contract the services of commercial programs. Many school reform models include substantial professional development. Besure to review a professional development program for its content, quality, and context prior to committing resources and time.

Table 2

Effectiveness Estimates for Five Models of Professional Development

Desired Outcome	Individually Guided	Observation Assessment	Development/ Improvement/ Process	Training	Inquiry
Mastery of a simple, specific teaching skill	Medium: requires more time to plan than other models	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90%	Low: better suited for broader outcomes	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	Medium: less efficient than other models
Implementation of a complex set of teaching strategies	Medium: less efficient than other models	Medium: harder to observe complex strategies	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: more complex outcomes make follow-up more important	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90%
Gaining insight into how students learn	Medium: includes professional observation of students	Low: focuses on observing teacher's behavior not students'	Medium: less efficient than other models	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: effective in testing hypotheses
Mastery of new classroom management skills	Medium: less efficient than other models	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90%	Low: better suited for broader outcomes	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90%
Implementation of new assessment procedures	Medium: includes collaboration with others	Medium: assessment procedures are not always observable	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	High: effective, but time-consuming
Solving a complex problem dealing with improving student achievement	High: flexibility allows activities to be designed specifically for this outcome	Low: better suited for giving feedback than problem-solving	Medium: can be adapted to problem-solving tasks	Low: better suited for supporting implementation than creating new knowledge	Highest: effective in solving complex generates a great deal of learning

Table 2 continued

Desired Outcome	Individually Guided	Observation Assessment	Development/ Improvement/ Process	Training	Inquiry
Acquiring group leadership skills, working as a team to solve a problem	Medium: allows members to learn what they need, when they need to know it	Low: these skills developed outside the classroom, less observable	Highest: leadership opportunities abound in this model	Low: better suited for supporting implementation than creating new knowledge	Medium: less efficient than other models
Increasing knowledge of content or subject matter	Medium: include professional reading and contact with subject matter experts	Low: focuses on teacher's behavior, not content knowledge	Highest: important element is acquiring new knowledge to solve a problem or meet a specific need	High: effective in helping teachers acquire new knowledge, especially in applying it	Medium: less efficient than other models, focus is creating new knowledge, not acquiring knowledge

Worksheet 2—Review of a Professional Development Program provides key questions to help the planning team determine the potential effectiveness of a program. It may be useful to have several team members review the program separately and compare results.

Allowing for School Autonomy

The purposes of consolidated planning are to provide a direction for a school district and to target resources effectively toward achieving district goals. If common professional development needs are identified across the district or at clusters of schools, then these needs can be addressed most efficiently by offering activities to all teachers rather than conducting isolated school events on the same topics.

However, consolidated planning does not preclude decision making at the school level. Each school can and should plan its own professional development activities that support district goals. School faculty should participate in districtwide professional development events and programs, but they should also have district support for planning activities that address the unique needs of their school and for collegial planning, sharing, and support at their school site. The consolidated plan is not a top-down effort to make all schools in a district alike. The district should act as a support system to help each school progress toward district goals with the plan as a guide.

Worksheet 3—Professional Development Plan assists the planning team in reviewing selected professional development activities to ensure that they reflect a comprehensive and cohesive approach to addressing district needs. By including dates, the team can determine if professional development in the district will be a continuous effort to empower teachers to help students achieve district goals. By including participants and resources, the team can target professional development resources toward areas of greatest need.

Step Five

Share the Professional Development Plan

After the planning team has selected professional development programs and strategies, the team should share the plan for input. Explain how the plan grew out of a needs assessment and review of research-based programs and strategies, and emphasize the alignment of the plan with district goals. In consolidated planning, school districts should review professional development activities that have routinely taken place, continue only those that align with identified needs, and initiate new ones. This ensures that resources target real needs.

The planning team may find some resistance to the professional development plan—"but we have always sent teachers to this conference." Help educators understand and support the close alignment of professional development with district goals and the alternative formats for professional development. Nevertheless, the team should consider all input and suggestions and make appropriate revisions.

In addition, the planning team needs administrative support (it can make or break professional development. Many professional development programs have little impact without the time, materials, or restructuring of the school day that may be required by of new strategies. The planning team must emphasize that the success of the professional development program depends on the support of both district and school administrators.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After developing a professional development plan, review it according to the following checklist.

_____ 1. Professional development topics have been identified through a needs assessment process.

_____ 2. Professional development needs are linked to district goals, student achievement data, and teacher self-assessment.

_____ 3. Professional development activities are appropriate in terms of the needs they address, their purpose, and projected outcomes.

_____ 4. Activities include research-based features of effective professional development.

_____ 5. Activities are designed to build teacher capacity for continuous improvement.

_____ 6. Commercial professional development models have been evaluated for their quality and appropriateness.

_____ 7. The professional development plan has been shared with administrators, faculty, and staff across the district, and their input has been incorporated into revisions.

If all items on the checklist are checked, the team should proceed to *Module Seven: Linking the Pieces.*

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Planning Professional Development

Planning Professional Development

Worksheet 1—Connecting Professional Development Needs to Student Achievement

Instructions

Step One: List priority needs in the area of student achievement.

Step Two: List topics related to district and school improvement goals and strategies selected to achieve these goals.

Step Three: List top-ranked topics identified through teacher self-assessment activities.

Topics Identified through Analysis of Student Achievement Data	Topics Identified through Analysis of District and School Improvement Goals and Strategies Selected to Achieve These Goals	Topics Identified through Teacher Self-Assessment

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(Adapted from Collins, 1997)

Worksheet 2—Review of a Professional Development Program

Content

1. What changes in instruction, curriculum, and assessment are likely to occur when this program is implemented?

2. To what degree do the activities reflect an integrated, cohesive approach to teaching and learning across the district?

3. Does the program provide a range of ongoing activities that address awareness, practice, application, and institutionalization of new skills?

4. What do educators who have participated in similar professional development activities report to know and be able to do?

Program Quality

1. What characteristics of effective professional development are reflected in this program?

2. To what extent will the program enable educators to implement programs and strategies that result in improved student achievement?

3. What improvements in student achievement can be linked to these professional development activities?

4. What kinds of follow-up activities and ongoing assistance are provided to ensure that teachers feel confident in applying their new knowledge and skills?

Context Factors

1. What are the time frames and structures needed to implement this professional development program?
2. Does the program align with the school's/district's vision and with teaching and learning strategies currently in place?
3. Are the activities appropriate for the educators' backgrounds and professional frames of reference?
4. Are student populations that have been directly impacted by teachers participating in this type of professional development activity similar to the student populations that would be targeted in this district?
5. What type of support is required of administrators and faculty for the implementation of this program?
6. To what extent will this program build the district's capacity for continuous improvement?

Planning Professional Development

Worksheet 3—Professional Development Plan

Instructions

1. List professional development topics prioritized from **Worksheet 1**.
2. List professional development activities that provide a range of experiences from awareness to implementation in a context of ongoing support and continuous learning.
3. List participants by school, content, role, and/or grade-level.
4. Include dates when activities will take place or deadlines when activities will be completed.
5. List resources needed for the activities, including consultants, consultants' fees, materials, substitutes for participating teachers, release time, materials, etc.

Prioritized Professional Development Topics	Activities	Participants	Dates	Resources

MODULE SIX

6

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MODULE SEVEN

MAKING Schools MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

7 LINKING THE PIECES

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

7 LINKING THE PIECES

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

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MODULE SEVEN

Making Resources Matter

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MODULE SEVEN

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About Module Seven

Module Seven describes steps for ensuring that all components of the plan are linked, aligned, and mutually reinforcing.

Step One: Ensure alignment of all sections of the plan.

Step Two: Align the plan with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other Federal programs.

Step Three: Link the district goals with the goals and initiatives of the state department of education and the state consolidated plan.

Step Four: Link district instructional programs and strategies, professional development, and assessment with state standards.

Step Five: Link district programs.

Step Six: Link the schools and the district connections.

Step Seven: Coordinate and integrate services for special needs children.

Step Eight: Link with agencies that serve children.

Step Nine: Maintain communication with school staff.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns related to linking all components of an educational system. Examples throughout the module illustrate effective strategies for coordinating and aligning programs.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While they may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of *Module Seven* addresses linkage for each section of the plan. The team may review the draft of the consolidated plan as a whole, or they may use the items to review each section of the plan as it is developed.

Linking the Pieces

"I'm a self-taught mechanic, and not a very good one at that," the district science coordinator disclosed. "But I've learned a few things over the years."

"One summer I was fixing up the lawn mower and bought a new air filter for it. Unfortunately, it was the wrong one for the model I had, but it was close enough that I decided to use it anyway rather than go back to get another one. So I rigged up a coupling to attach it to the mower, and lo and behold the mower started. I thought I was set.

"Well, it was one of the most aggravating mowing seasons I've ever experienced. Every time I tried to start the mower, I had to tighten the coupling, and usually at least once as I mowed, the air filter fell off, and I'd have to stop and reattach it. Also, the air-fuel mixture wasn't quite right, and the mower sputtered and stalled a lot. Finally, I wised up and bought the right air filter and attached it, and the mower has been fine ever since.

"I learned a lot from that experience about making sure parts fit. I began to think about this in relation to my work in the district.

"Three years ago, a group of teachers wanted to reinstitute a district science and social studies fair. From past experience, I knew that the fair was for the most part an enjoyable event—parents got involved in helping their kids put a project together, the community enjoyed seeing the displays and presentations, and kids liked having a festival.

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However, in terms of learning, the fair was an isolated event that didn't fit in with the curriculum. Teachers tried to figure out how to make extra time in class for kids to work on their projects, and many resented the time taken away from the required curriculum. They complained, 'Why should science and social studies teachers have to sacrifice instructional time?'

"I assembled a committee of teachers and parents, and we began to brainstorm ways to make the science fair part of the district curriculum. We came up with some strategies to make this a meaningful learning experience that would reinforce and be reinforced by everything kids did in school. These were some of our ideas:

- Make science and social studies fair projects part of the curriculum with preparatory activities and follow up activities—in fact, the projects could be the culmination of a year-long investigative learning activity.
- Use science and social studies fair projects to integrate subject areas and help the children see links between and apply learning from all their classes—all the teachers in the school would work toward making the fair meaningful.
- Review the state curriculum standards for science and social studies, and make sure that the projects reflect an understanding of these—in other words, the projects would be a performance assessment.
- Communicate the purpose of the science and social studies fair to parents and provide a workshop on ways they can help reinforce their children's learning.

"We put these ideas in place and the fair has become an integral part of our whole curriculum. Early in the school year, our teachers from all subject areas work together to get the most mileage from the projects in terms of student learning. The children know that their projects are important and work harder knowing that it's not just something extra to do. The parents appreciate understanding how the fair reinforces the standards and other learning skills, and they are much more willing to help the kids learn from the experience. The science and social studies fair, once an inconvenient add-on, now is an event that strengthens the whole system.

"It's funny how one little part can affect everything. A piece that doesn't fit can weaken a system, but a piece that fits well can strengthen it."

In this module, the planning team will

- Examine strategies to ensure that the district goals, prioritized needs, instructional programs and strategies, professional development, needed resources, budget items, and plan evaluation, are interconnected and aligned
- Review requirements of the ESEA regarding local consolidated planning
- Review district and state legislative mandates, standards, educational goals
- Develop strategies for ensuring that schools are represented in the district consolidated planning process and have opportunities for input
- Identify opportunities for collaboration among programs and with community agencies to use resources effectively and to minimize duplication
- Ensure that the needs of at-risk children are addressed in the plan

Expected Outcomes

- Each section of the plan links the district vision, needs assessment, programs, professional development, budgeting, and evaluation.
- The plan addresses federal, state, and local mandates.

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- The plan represents and supports the needs of all schools in the district.
- The plan links programs and resources within the school system and in the community.
- The plan addresses the needs of at-risk children.

Basic Premises

- The 1994 *ESEA* requires alignment of all major components affecting teaching and learning.
- Challenging standards are much more likely to be met if the other important elements of teaching and learning—including assessments, instructional materials, and professional development—are aligned with the standards. [U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *Cross-cutting guidance for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.* Washington, D.C.: Author, p.18]
- District consolidated planning must be a "bottom-up" process that includes a careful review of each school's needs. The plan should include strategies for the district to provide necessary resources and support to schools and student populations with greater needs, thereby ensuring opportunities for all children to achieve to high standards.

The Steps to Linking the Pieces

Step One

Ensure Alignment of All Sections of the Plan

When all pieces of a plan are aligned, each section clearly relates to all others, and each step of the planning process builds on the one before and establishes the foundation for the next one. It should be very clear, for example, that professional development relates to instructional strategies that support district goals, and that budget items support the instructional programs and professional development described in the plan. A formative evaluation process should be in place to continually assess progress toward district goals. It is critical that the indicators of progress in the evaluation align with district goals and objectives. As the following example illustrates, parent involvement activities should align with district goals as well.

> **Example:** The Owensville planning team selected as one of its goals to improve math scores across the district. The team selected strategies that involved children using math manipulatives to reinforce concepts and to solve word problems. Not only did professional development for teachers target building their instructional skills in using math manipulatives, but the district also decided to provide resources and training for parents to help their children use math manipulatives. A series of three meetings was planned in conjunction with PTO meetings. The district allocated some of its instructional materials resources to "math packs" for children to take home. These strategies to involve parents worked well—math concepts were reinforced at home in a manner consistent with what the children were learning in class, and parents felt empowered to support their children's learning.

The following items are part of the Reviewing and Organizing Checklist at the end of the module. Team members should review the plan using this checklist, as well as the checklists at the end of each module in the *Making Resources Matter* series.

Reviewing and Organizing Checklist Items—Linking All Parts of the Plan

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- The district goals relate directly to prioritized needs.

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- The objectives, when met, will lead to the achievement of the goals.

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

- The programs and strategies will enable the district to achieve its goals and objectives.

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

- The professional development activities will enable teachers and administrators to implement the programs and strategies selected to achieve district goals and objectives.

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

- The resources, materials, and staffing requested are necessary to support the programs and strategies and professional development selected to achieve district goals.

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

- Formative evaluation strategies will periodically assess the degree to which the plan is being implemented.
- The evaluation plan will chart improvement in student achievement as measured by state assessment and other assessment methods.
- The indicators of progress align with district goals and objectives.

As the relationships among parts of the plan are made explicit, some team members may fear that such a tight framework will restrict creativity and innovation. The group should consider the following points.

- The comprehensive and encompassing nature of the consolidated plan brings together isolated programs and efforts that, like individual twigs, are fragile by themselves, but whose strength is magnified when bundled together. Programs directed toward common goals and objectives are much more likely to impact district and school improvement.
- Teachers and administrators will find a great deal of flexibility in determining how best to gear their instruction toward district goals and objectives. The programs and strategies in the consolidated plan should enable teachers to do what they do best. The planning team should recommend programs that encourage teachers to draw on their own strengths and to be creative in implementing instructional strategies.
- Plan and program evaluation is a continuous process. Teachers and administrators should never feel locked into implementing a program that is not working. The planning team should set short-term objectives and establish benchmarks to assess progress frequently, keeping in mind that it takes time to see positive results during the implementation of any new program. If programs are not working after a reasonable amount of time, teachers can always stop, assess, and revise. Creativity, in fact, is a key to the success of any plan or program because implementation is never without glitches. The plan will work best with periodic tune-ups and adjustments, always keeping the goals in mind.

> **Tip:** See *Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan* for strategies on revising the plan.

- The appropriateness, and even the necessity, of the plan's elements—staff, programs, professional development activities, and resource allocation—can be assessed only if the focus is on district goals. If elements do not fit in the plan, budget resources should be freed to support elements that do align with the plan. In the case of staff, roles may be redefined to contribute toward goals. The plan should be viewed as a mechanism to focus resources toward common goals.

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Step Two

Align the Plan with the Requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Other Federal Programs

The district consolidated plan must align with requirements of the *ESEA* and other federal programs. The planning team should share and discuss the following information.

The Cross-cutting guidance for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act includes five guiding themes of the *ESEA* that offer a framework for thinking and implementing school reform with *ESEA* resources. These five themes should be reflected throughout the consolidated plan.

Theme One—High standards for all children. The elements of education must align so that everything works together to help all students reach those standards. No child should be held to lowered expectations; each is expected to acquire the knowledge and skills to become a productive citizen in the 21st century.

Theme Two—A focus on teaching and learning. Include the elements important to effective teaching and learning: professional development that prepares teachers to teach to challenging standards, high-quality curricula and instruction, and technical assistance and support.

Theme Three—Partnerships among families, communities, and schools that support student achievement to high standards. Parent involvement in education sends a loud, clear message that education is important. It supports students as they learn. Powerful connections among schools, communities, and businesses can help make schools better and safer learning environments and can effect smooth transitions from preschool to school and from school to work.

Theme Four—Flexibility to stimulate local school-based and district initiatives, coupled with responsibility for student performance. Consensus is growing that the local school can best determine the appropriate approaches for helping individual children. Under the *ESEA*, districts and schools are accountable for reaching challenging goals, but they have the flexibility in deciding how to get there.

Theme Five—Resources targeted to areas with greatest needs, in amounts sufficient to make a difference. A basic premise of standards-based reform is that one cannot choose between equity and excellence. *ESEA* contains several provisions to ensure equitable distribution of resources, equitable participation of private school students in federal programs, and equitable involvement of children with special needs in education reforms.

Adapted from: U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *Cross-cutting guidance for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.* Washington, D.C.: Author.

Funds from federal programs may be consolidated to support particular programs and overall district and/or school improvement. Keep in mind, however, that program coordinators must be able to show how funds are allocated and how children targeted by these funds are being served. For example, portions of a district's federal funds for Title I and for migrant education could support a reading program as long as documentation shows how this reading program serves Title I and migrant children. In other words, funds cannot be comingled; the district is accountable for how funds are used.

Districts may consolidate the same programs that are consolidated in their state's plan. The planning team should review the state consolidated plan and consult with staff from the state department of education for clarification.

MODULE SEVEN

Four resources to help the district planning team address federal program requirements

- District program coordinators who serve on the planning team
- An application to consolidate programs provided by the state department of education
- State department of education program coordinators
- The U.S. Department of Education

The team also needs to be familiar with the intent and funding requirements of each of the federal programs to be included in the consolidated plan. Members must know, in particular, on what types of activities and resources funds can be spent.

The team can get more information on the programs by reading the *1994 Improving America's Schools Act* and by reading guidances issued by the U.S. Department of Education. U.S. Department of Education resources are available on-line at www.ed.gov; publications can be ordered by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

In addition, the district plan must comply with federal requirements for consolidated planning. Following is the legislation from the *Improving America's Schools Act, Title I Part A, Section 1112*, which addresses local consolidated planning.

Each local educational agency plan shall include

1. A description of additional high-quality student assessments, if any, other than the assessments described in the state plan under *Section 1111*, that the local educational agency and schools served will use to—
   a. Determine the success of children served under this part, state's student performance standards; state student performance standards described in *Section 1111 (b) (I), (D) (ii)* and provide information to teachers, parents, and students on the progress being made toward meeting state student performance standards.
   b. Assist in diagnosis, teaching, and learning in the classroom in ways that best enable children served under this part to meet state standards and do well in the local curriculum.
   c. Determine what revisions are needed to projects under this part so that such children will meet the state's student performance standards.
2. At the local educational agency's discretion, a description of any other indicators that will be used in addition to the assessments described in paragraph (1) for the uses described in such paragraph.
3. A description of the strategy the local educational agency will use to provide professional development for teachers, and where appropriate, pupil services personnel, administrators, parents, and other staff, including local educational agency staff in accordance with *Section 1119*.
4. A description of how the local educational agency will coordinate and integrate services provided under this part with other educational services at the local educational agency or individual school level, such as—
   a. Even Start, Head Start, and other preschool programs, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs, vocational education programs, and school-to-work transition programs.
   b. Services for children with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, migratory children served under part C or who were formerly eligible for services under part C in the two-year period preceding the date of the enactment of the *IASA*, neglected or

delinquent youth and youth at risk of dropping out served under part D, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program.

5. A description of the poverty criteria that will be used to select school attendance areas under *Section 1113.*
6. A description of how teachers, in consultation with parents, administrators, and pupil services personnel, in targeted assistance schools under *Section 1115 B*) will identify the eligible children most in need of services under this part.
7. A general description of the nature of the programs to be conducted by such agency's schools under *Sections 1114* and *1115* and, where appropriate, educational services outside such schools for children living in local institutions for neglected and delinquent children, for neglected and delinquent children in community day school programs, and for eligible homeless children.
8. A description of how the local educational agency will ensure that migratory children and formerly migratory children who are eligible to receive services under this part are selected to receive such services on the same basis as other children who are selected to receive services under this part.
9. Where appropriate, a description of how the local educational agency will use funds under this part to support preschool programs for children, particularly children participating in a Head Start or Even Start program, which services may be provided directly by the local educational agency or through a subcontract with the local Head Start agency, agencies operating Even Start programs, or another comparable public early childhood development program.

The local educational agency plan shall also provide assurances that the local educational agency will inform eligible schools and parents of schoolwide project authority and will provide technical assistance and support to schoolwide programs.

Items on the following checklist, developed from the *IASA Legislation Title I, Part A, Section 1112*, are part of the Reviewing and Organizing Checklist at the end of the module. Team members should review the plan using this checklist, in addition to the checklists at the ends of the other modules.

Review and Organizing Checklist— Linking to Federal Programs

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- The plan includes a description of any high-quality student assessments used in addition to those mandated by the state.
- The plan includes a description of any other indicators the district uses to assess student performance.
- The plan includes a description of poverty criteria and percentage of children from impoverished backgrounds.
- The plan includes strategies for how staff in targeted-assisted schools identify eligible children and includes percentages of children who are eligible to receive services.

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

- The plan includes a description of how the district will coordinate with other agencies at the district level or school level, such as Even Start, preschool programs, vocational education, or school-to-work transition programs.
- The plan describes how the district will coordinate with other agencies at the district

or school level to provide services for special needs children, including those with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, migratory children, neglected or delinquent youth and youth at risk of dropping out, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program.

- The plan describes how educational services will be provided in schools and in the community for neglected and delinquent and homeless children.
- The plan describes how migratory children and formerly migratory children will receive services.
- The plan describes how the district will support preschool programs, especially Head Start and Even Start.
- The plan describes how the district will provide technical assistance and support for Title I schoolwide schools.

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

- The plan includes a description of all professional development for teachers and, where appropriate, pupil services personnel, administrators, parents, and other staff, including local educational agency staff.

Step Three

Link the District with the Goals and Initiatives of the State Department of Education and the State Consolidated Plan

Because districts and schools are part of the state system of education, their programs must align with the state educational goals and current education reform legislation. Some state departments of education have guidances, informational materials, and local consolidated plan applications available to assist with the local consolidated planning process. The planning team should ask a state department representative for materials and technical assistance related to local consolidated planning. If a state department does not have any formal materials or training available, the team may request that a representative from the department serve as a contact to provide guidance and feedback on the plan as it is developed. The team may also contact technical assistance providers such as the Comprehensive Center or Regional Educational Laboratory in their region.

The planning team should be familiar with and have the following information on hand for reference throughout the planning process:

- application procedures and forms for the district consolidated plan
- state educational goals and standards
- state legislative educational mandates and reforms
- requirements of the federal programs included in the state consolidated plan and/or others that are included in the district plan

Step Four

Link District Instructional Programs and Strategies, Professional Development, and Assessment with State Standards

The planning team should review a copy of the state content and performance standards to ensure that district goals align with the standards. The standards should be the focal point of instructional programs, professional development, and assessment. This focus will bring the components closer in alignment.

The planning team should be familiar with the state educational assessment system and the performance of district students on the state assessment. As part of the needs assessment, the planning team should review district-wide student performance on the state assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness. This information should be reflected in the goals and objectives established for the district. The programs and strategies in the plan should align with content tested in the state assessment. In addition, professional development activities should build teachers' skills in using strategies that will enhance student performance on the state assessment. This is not to say that the district plan should focus only on the state assessment; rather, it should promote good learning in a comprehensive way that will enable students to perform well on the state assessment and other measures of learning.

The following items are part of the Reviewing and Organizing Checklist at the end of this module to help ensure alignment of each section of the plan with state education goals, legislative mandates, and student performance expectations.

Review and Organizing Checklist— Linking to State Education Goals, Legislative Mandates, and Assessments

Module Three: Developing the Vision

- The district vision and mission align with those of the schools, the state, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- Student performance on the state assessment reflected in the district goals.

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

- Programs align with state content and performance standards.
- Programs reflect state education reform goals and initiatives.
- Programs target student performance in weak areas reflected in the state assessment.

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

- Professional development will help teachers, school staff, and parents build their skills to implement state standards.
- Professional development will help teachers improve instructional strategies in those areas where students perform poorly on the state assessment.

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

- Programs consolidated in the district plan reflect those consolidated in the state plan and/or are those recommended for consolidation in state guidance for district consolidated planning.
- Funds are allocated for programs and resources that support and reinforce state education goals and reform initiatives.

Step Five

Link District Programs

"Each local educational agency plan submitted under the following programs shall be integrated with each other and its local improvement plan, if any, either approved or being developed, under Title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act:

A. Part A of Title I (helping disadvantaged children meet high standards)

B. Title II (professional development)

C. Title IV (safe and drug-free schools)

D. Subpart 4 of Part A of Title IX (Indian education)

E. Subpart 1 of Part A of Title VII (bilingual education)

F. Title VI (innovative education program strategies)

G. Part C of Title VII (emergency immigrant education)"

IASA, Title XIV, Part C, Section 14307 (b)

Federal education programs included in the local consolidated planning process have the same purpose: to help at-risk students to achieve to high standards. Because many students fall into several at-risk categories, they are eligible to be served by more than one program. Consolidating these programs allows resources to be targeted toward these students in a more intense and unified effort.

For this reason, district program coordinators are important members of the planning team. During the planning process, they should identify ways to link their programs to avoid duplication. When two or more programs combine resources, the result can be one program that can do more for the students, rather than two small programs whose resources are too limited to provide the quality of services that are needed. Serving on the planning team provides an opportunity for program coordinators to explore ways to make the most of their resources.

> **Example:** The Meadow view school district submitted a grant to establish a program for their homeless students using funds provided by the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. The coordinator for the homeless program worked closely with the district Title I coordinator to set up an after-school program for at-risk students. Because the purpose of serving impoverished, at-risk students is common to both McKinney and Title I, establishing one program enabled the two coordinators to pool their resources and provide more services to all Title I children, including those from homeless families.

Step Six

Link the Schools and the District

One of the greatest challenges of local consolidated planning is ensuring that individual school needs are met while consolidating resources to meet district needs. The planning team assesses needs and develops a plan for the improvement of education in the district as a whole, but the team should also examine specialized needs of each school to make sure that these are addressed.

Equal is not Equity: Consolidated planning does not mean allocating resources equally across the district. Rather, the process should identify areas of greater or specialized need so that more resources can be targeted in these areas to ensure that all students have the support they need to achieve to high standards.

Schools should have school improvement plans developed through a planning process similar to the one described in these modules (vision and goal setting, needs assessment, and programs selected to address identified needs. **The planning team should examine these school improvement plans to identify common needs across the schools, cluster needs at several schools, and special needs at individual schools.**

This information will enable the planning team to consolidate programs and funds to address common needs and to target resources for specialized needs. The district's role in consolidated planning is not to determine programming at the school level, but to plan effective use of resources to support schools so that all children can achieve. (In *Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment*, worksheets are provided to assist with identifying needs from school improvement plans.)

As planning becomes an ongoing process in a school system, many districts require the consolidated planning team members to meet with school planning teams to help align school improvement plans with district goals and to discuss school needs that should be addressed in the district plan. The ongoing communication between school and district planning teams ensures that the district plan evolves from the bottom up, as well as the top down. Schools are much more likely to support district plans in which they see their needs adequately represented.

Step Seven

Coordinate and Integrate Services for Special Needs Children

Title I, Section 1112 (b) (4) requires that the local consolidated plan include a description of how the district will coordinate and integrate services for children with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, migratory children, neglected and delinquent youth and youth at risk of dropping out, homeless children, and immigrant children. (*IASA*) The plan must include a description of services provided in schools and outside of the schools, such as local institutions or community day school programs for neglected and delinquent children.

The intent is to ensure that all children in the district are not just included in educational programs and services, but that children with special needs receive additional support so they can achieve to high standards. Just as Federal program coordinators are expected to coordinate their programs to maximize resources and minimize duplication of services, coordinators and providers serving special needs children should use the consolidated planning process to collaborate and integrate their services.

Step Eight

Link with Agencies that Serve Children

"Each local educational agency plan shall provide assurances that the local educational agency will coordinate and collaborate, to the extent feasible and necessary as determined by the local educational agency, with other agencies providing services to children, youth, and families, including health and social services." *IASA, Title I, Section 1112 (c)(1)(E)*

Collaboration between schools and community agencies expands the capacity of both to address the complex needs of children. Kadel (1993) explains

> Family structure, housing, health care, educational achievement, income, social behavior, and future opportunities cannot each be addressed in isolation. The interrelation among these and other factors reinforces the need for human service agencies to address family problems in a collaborative, comprehensive manner. (p. 4)

As mentioned in *Module Two: Establishing the Team*, community service agency representatives should serve on the planning team. In addition, the district should seek other collaborative relationships with community agencies in an ongoing effort to provide coordinated services. The school system cannot address all the needs of children; therefore, the district plan should include strategies for contributing to and drawing from the web of services that a community offers.

Review and Organizing Checklist — Linking with Agencies

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

- The plan includes strategies for collaborating with agencies to meet the complex needs of children.

Step Nine

Maintain Communication with School Staff

Continuous communication with individual schools is important to the planning process. The team should share progress on plan development and drafts. The planning team should invite recommendations from administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and students on both a formal and informal basis. Team members should represent all schools and role groups in some fashion, and should maintain ongoing communication with their constituents.

Communication both ensures alignment with the needs of schools in the district and increases the likelihood of support for implementation at the

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school level. The planning team may wish to use some of the following strategies to nurture communications:

- Provide press releases to school newsletters
- Develop a newsletter
- Send drafts to school principals with a feedback sheet attached
- Call principals by phone for feedback
- Attend a faculty meeting, school improvement committee meeting, or parent-teacher association meeting to discuss the district consolidated plan

Reviewing and Organizing Checklist

Because alignment and linkage are integral to all components of the plan, they must be considered in the development of each of the components—vision, needs assessment, programs, professional development, budgeting, and evaluation. The checklist items listed throughout this module are all included in the following Review and Organizing Checklist. Planning team members should review each section of the consolidated plan in relation to this checklist to ensure appropriate alignment and linkages.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

Module Three: Developing the Vision

- The district vision/mission aligns with those of the schools, the state, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- The district goals relate directly to prioritized needs.
- The plan includes a description of any high-quality student assessments used in addition to those mandated by the state.
- The plan includes a description of any other indicators the district uses to assess student performance.
- The plan includes a description of poverty criteria and percentage of children from impoverished backgrounds.
- The plan includes strategies for how staff in targeted-assisted schools identify eligible children and includes percentages of children who are eligible to receive services.
- Student performance on the state assessment is included in the needs assessment and reflected in the district goals.
- The objectives, when met, will lead to the achievement of the district goals.

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

- The programs and strategies will enable the district to achieve its goals.
- The plan includes a description of how the district will coordinate with other agencies at the district level or school level, such as Even Start, preschool programs, vocational education, or school-to-work transition programs.
- The plan describes how the district will coordinate with other agencies at the district or school level to provide services for special needs children, including those with limited-English proficiency or with disabilities, migratory children, neglected or delinquent youth and youth at risk of dropping out, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program.

- The plan describes how educational services will be provided in schools and in the community for neglected and delinquent and homeless children.
- The plan describes how migratory children and formerly migratory children will receive services.
- The plan describes how the district will support preschool programs, especially Head Start and Even Start.
- The plan describes how the district will provide technical assistance and support for schoolwide schools.
- Programs align with state standards for content and instruction.
- Programs reflect state education reform initiatives.
- Programs will target student performance in weak areas reflected in the state assessment.
- The plan includes strategies for collaborating with agencies to meet the complex needs of children.

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

- The professional development activities will enable teachers and administrators to implement the programs and strategies selected to achieve district goals.
- The plan includes a description of all professional development for teachers and, where appropriate, pupil services personnel, administrators, parents, and other staff, including local educational agency staff.
- Professional development will help teachers, school staff, and parents align their curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards.
- Professional development will help teachers improve instructional strategies in those areas where students perform poorly on the state assessment.

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

- The resources, materials, and staffing requested are necessary to support the programs and strategies and professional development selected to achieve district goals.
- Programs consolidated in the district plan reflect those consolidated in the state plan and/or are those recommended for consolidation in state guidance for district consolidated planning.

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

- Formative evaluation strategies will periodically assess the degree to which the plan is being implemented.
- The evaluation plan will chart improvement in student achievement, as measured by state assessment and other assessment methods.
- The indicators of progress align with district goals and objectives.

References & Resources

Kadel, S. (1993). *Interagency collaboration: Improving the delivery of services to and families.* Tallahassee, FL: SERVE.

U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *Cross-cutting guidance for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.* Washington, D.C.: Author.

NOTES

MODULE SEVEN

7

Region IV Comprehensive AEL

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MODULE EIGHT

MAKING
Education
MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

BUDGETING THE PLAN

Region IV
Comprehensive
at AEL

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Improving Learning through Research & Development

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING Resources MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

8 BUDGETING THE PLAN

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE EIGHT

Making Resources Matter

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About Module Eight

Module Eight describes a step-by-step process for developing the consolidated budget.

Step One: Identify costs of programs and strategies selected to address district goals and other Federal mandates.

Step Two: Discuss proposed expenditures with stakeholders.

Step Three: Determine what funds are available.

Step Four: Allocate resources to programs.

Step Five: Explore funding alternatives.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to budgeting a district plan. Examples included throughout the module show effective practices for developing a consolidated budget.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work. While they may not align with consolidated plan applications provided by the state or district, completed worksheets will serve as a useful repository of readily accessible information for any application the district may develop.

The "Organizing and Reviewing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work and assess its readiness to complete the consolidated plan. The consolidated plan may be submitted before the team addresses issues related to implementing and revising the plan, which are the topics of *Module Nine* and *Module Ten*. However, keep in mind that a good plan is never "finished." Implementation and revision must be ongoing if a plan is to remain current and address emerging issues. *Module Nine* and *Module Ten* provide strategies for making the plan a living tool for achieving district goals.

Budgeting the Plan

The Pendleton County school district planning team identified strengthening its elementary math program as its focus for school improvement. Contributing causes to the students' low performance in math included a K-2 math program that was neither rigorous nor aligned to the grades 3-6 curriculum. Also, a recent switch in grades 3-6 from departmentalized teaching to self-contained teaching resulted in many teachers being asked to teach math, reading, or science for the first time in a number of years.

The planning team researched strategies and programs that would strengthen the district's math program by focusing on developing and enhancing the teachers' skills. They looked into a comprehensive program called Math All-Stars. This program provided ongoing professional development to help teachers implement hands-on, inquiry-based instruction and align their instructional strategies and curriculum across grades K-6. Similar districts across the nation had reported good results with this program. When teachers were provided information and surveyed for their input, most agreed that they would like to see this program implemented at their school.

The planning team contacted the program developers and negotiated fees for their services over the next three years. Needless to say, the program was costly.

The team began to plan the budget and realized that the district would have to make some tough choices to find the resources to implement Math All-Stars. One area team members examined for additional resources was that of staffing. They discussed the possibility of reducing the number of positions for remedial pull-out programs and returning these teachers to the regular classroom. They reviewed these positions in light of federal, state, and district mandates and hiring policies, and identified areas where they felt changes could be made.

They also reviewed the position of a science resource teacher who worked among three elementary schools and the position of a part-time art teacher who worked in two elementary schools. The team looked at these positions in terms of their alignment with the identified district goal of improving math. The planning team discussed possibilities for reassigning these staff with each of the schools that would be affected. The faculties were very resistant. The science resource teacher and art teacher had been in their positions for a long time and were respected by their colleagues. In addition, many of the regular classroom teachers appreciated help in teaching science and art, questioning their own abilities to do so as effectively. They felt that the planning team's proposal demonstrated a lack of support for these content areas.

The planning team provided the following arguments.

1. The district as a whole, with much input from teachers and other stakeholders, identified math as an area of critical need. Therefore, all schools needed to focus their efforts and resources on improving math teaching and learning.
2. Returning some of the remedial and resource teachers to the regular classroom would free funds that could be used to enable all teachers to improve their instructional skills. (This would, of course, be done in accordance with district mandates and hiring policies.) Using resources allocated for salaries for professional development would build the capacity of all teachers in the district to address needs and reduce the need for as many pull-out programs. All teachers would be responsible for improving teaching and learning in critical needs areas.
3. The intent of federal funds is to improve teaching and learning by addressing identified weak areas. Since science and art were not identified as areas of critical need, it would be more in line with the purposes of the Improving America's Schools Act to target resources to where they were most needed. This is not to say that the district should not support science or art. In fact, the district and the schools should examine other funding possibilities to ensure funding for these positions.

These arguments sparked much controversy among the school faculties. Most resisted the concept of reallocating staff positions, but some admitted that resources for a few positions could be put to better use.

Although staffing is a logical area to reexamine in light of what is known about effective schools, it is a particularly troublesome one. Still, the conversations need to take place, and district planning teams may be the vanguards of reform in the area of school and district budgeting.

In this module, the planning team will

- Develop a budget that consolidates program and funding resources
- Align the budget with priority needs, district goals, and identified programs and strategies
- Ensure that individual school needs are addressed in the budget
- Identify costs of programs and strategies selected to address needs
- Gather information on funds available
- Examine ways to leverage all available resources, and consider funding alternatives

Expected Outcome

The Planning team will develop a district budget that consolidates funds from various sources for educational improvement programs and strategies.

Basic Premises for Budgeting the Plan

- Funds budgeted for school improvement are spent on strategies to improve teaching and learning.

- Expenditures are driven by needs, priorities, goals, and objectives included in the [consolidated] plan.
- Resources are targeted to areas of greatest need, in amounts sufficient to make a difference.
- Fiscal resources are used in an integrated, coordinated way.
- Linkages are identified and established with other funding sources.
- Budgeting practices ensure compliance with federal and state requirements.
- Federal funds are used only to supplement state and local resources, not to supplant such funds.
- The district uses fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that ensure proper disbursement of and accounting for funds.

SOURCE: SERVE. (1997). *Planning for school improvement.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

Critical Issues and Tough Choices

The budget is the linch pin for consolidated planning, the point where the plan and resources intersect. In the simplest of worlds, budget development should be a process of matching needs with resources. In reality, however, the budget often becomes a battleground where (1) stakeholders compete for limited funds, (2) tradition, politics, and sacred cows—not identified needs—drive decisions, and (3) federal, state, and district requirements and procedures encumber the process with bureaucratic details.

Nevertheless, the guiding principle in budgeting must be to ensure that resources are allocated in ways that best serve students. As planning teams delve into the budgeting process, they need to focus and refocus themselves and their constituents on this principle.

The Steps of Budgeting The Plan

Step One

Identify Costs of Programs and Strategies Selected to Address District Goals and Other Federal Mandates

The first step in developing the budget for the consolidated plan is to determine the costs involved. These should align directly with the professional development and other programs and strategies selected to address district needs and goals. In fact, **any costs that do not align with the needs and goals should be eliminated from the consolidated plan**. For example, if the priority needs are in the area of improving reading, science laboratory equipment should not be a line item in the budget at this time. However, resources other than those included in the consolidated plan may be sought to fund programs and projects that do not relate to priority needs.

Worksheet 1—Program/Strategy Expenses assists the planning team in determining expenses for the consolidated plan. (*Copies of budget worksheets are included in Appendix A of this module.*) The team should list each district goal identified through the needs assessment, the research-based programs and strategies that address the goal, and then all costs involved with implementing the programs or strategies. At this point, the team should postpone discussions of funding sources or sufficient funds. The team should focus only on the costs involved in ensuring that schools will be able to achieve the district goals. **The object is to "budget the plan," rather than "plan the budget."**

The planning team also needs to determine what funds from the programs to be consolidated should be allocated to schools with individualized needs. Information on individual school needs should be available from the review of school goals and improvement plans conducted in the district needs assessment.

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If a school needs support to address district goals over and above what is provided to all schools in the district (i.e., a school with a significant migrant population), then this school should be funded over and above other schools across the district.

Worksheet 2—Expenses for Individual Schools helps the planning team determine expenses for individual schools based on their specialized needs. To consider funding for these needs, the planning team should ask, "If this program or strategy is funded at this school, will it enable the school to progress toward a district's goal at the same rate as other schools in the district that do not have this need?" Or, "If this program or strategy is not funded at this school, will the school be at a disadvantage in progressing toward a district goal?"

Step Two

Discuss Proposed Expenditures with Stakeholders

Once the expenses have been identified, the team should discuss them with school and district personnel, board members, and other planning partners for feedback that assists with prioritizing expenses. These discussions will also provide information on how funds have been spent in the past and what discrepancies exist between prior budgets and the proposed budget.

Step Three

Determine What Funds Are Available

Funds available to schools and districts come from many sources (federal, state, district, school, and community. Because funded programs have traditionally operated in isolation from one another, financial resources have rarely been reviewed in totality, much less coordinated or consolidated. Therefore, the planning team should develop a list of all sources of funding.

Figure 1 is a list of resources and categories of resources that are generally available to all districts. The list is not inclusive; therefore, the planning team

Figure 1

Funding Sources

Federal Entitlement Grants (U.S. Department of Education)

- Title I
- Title II (Eisenhower)
- Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools)
- Title VI (Innovative Education Program Strategies)
- Title VIB (Special Education)
- School-To-Work
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education and Applied Technology
- Tech Prep

Federal Competitive Grants (U.S. Department of Education)

- Title III (Goals 2000)
- Even Start
- McKinney Homeless
- Other grants that are available periodically (America Reads, 21st Century Challenge grants)

Federal Funds from Departments Other Than Education

- Department of Justice
- Department of Health & Human Services

State Funds

- Professional Development
- Technology
- Textbooks

State Competitive Grants

Foundation Grants

District Funds

Community Resources

- Grants from local businesses
- Proceeds from community fund-raising
- Proceeds from student and staff fund-raising
- Donations

should identify other resources specific to their state, district, or community. Entrepreneurial districts have staff who continually monitor *The Federal Register* and other publications that announce grant competitions to ensure that the district can access or compete for funds.

Worksheet 3—Description and Funding Information on Programs for Which Application Is Made through the Consolidated Plan and **Worksheet 4—Description and Funding Information on Programs and Resources Not among Those for Which Application Is Made through the Consolidated Plan** help planning teams review the funding for their district. Completing the worksheets may require research into a topic that is usually the responsibility of district and school administrators. The team must have this information if they are to be able to match resources with expenses.

Programs to be consolidated in the district application are governed by detailed federal or state statutes and regulations with which the district must comply. Program coordinators at the district or state level will review the applications to ensure that proposed uses of funds are in compliance with federal and state requirements for their respective programs. Planning team members should discuss the statutes and regulations with the program coordinators before completing **Worksheet 3**.

Figure 2 is an example of how the Bridgewater school district completed **Worksheet 3**.

Figure 2

Example of Bridgewater School District's Worksheet 3

Program Description	Budget Requirements/Guidance	District Allocation
IASA, Title I, Part A (Basic)—Title I, Part A encourages schools with high levels of poverty (50%+) to use funds to conduct schoolwide programs to upgrade the entire program of the school. Programs are encouraged to use research-based school reform strategies that provide an accelerated and enriched curriculum and increase the amount and quality of learning time. The programs must be integrated with other resources and initiatives. Targeted assistance programs are still operated in schools ineligible to be schoolwide or that choose not to operate a schoolwide program.	Provide children an enriched and accelerated program through services that increase the quality and extent of learning time; align school efforts to help students reach high standards with state and local education agencies; improve accountability, as well as, teaching and learning by using state assessment systems; promote schoolwide reform and access for all children to effective instructional strategies; upgrade the quality of instruction by providing substantial opportunities for sustained professional development; afford parents meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education at home and at school; coordinate services under all parts of Title I; coordinate Title I services with other educational services; distribute resources in amounts sufficient to make a difference to areas and schools where needs are greatest; provide for preschool transition, parental involvement, professional development for teachers and other personnel.	$605X

Figure 2 continued

Program Description	Budget Requirements/Guidance	District Allocation
IASA, Title I, Migrant—The basic purpose of the Migrant Education Program is to establish or improve programs of education for children of qualifying migrant workers in order that migrant children may succeed in the regular school program, attain grade-level proficiency, and meet the challenging content and student performance standards that all children are expected to meet.	Funds are used to ensure that migratory children benefit from state and local systemic reforms; prepare migratory children to make a successful transition to post-secondary education or employment; help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves, such as providing extended-time activities or employing teachers to offer instructional services in a pull-out program; ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services, including supportive services, that address their needs in a coordinated and efficient manner; help migratory children overcome cultural and language barriers, social isolation, health-related problems, and other factors that inhibit the ability to do well in school.	$355X
IASA, Title II (Dwight D. "Eisenhower" Professional Development Program)—The Eisenhower Program allots funds to all school districts to use in improving teaching and learning through professional development especially in the areas of mathematics and science. A specified percentage of each school district's grant can be used for other content areas and that percentage increases as federal funding increases. The intent of the program is to give teachers the knowledge and skills necessary to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging state performance standards.	At least 80 percent of these funds must be expended in ways determined by school staff. Funds may be targeted to schools with greater need as long as staff in those schools determine the ways the funds will be expended. The remainder (20 percent) may be used for district level professional development including costs for administering the program. The district is required to formally seek input from school councils on the use of these funds.	$404X
IASA, Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities)—Safe and Drug-free Schools funds are available to all school districts for programs and activities focused on the prevention of violence and drug	Use of Safe and Drug-free Schools funds is determined at the district level. This is accomplished by utilizing specific needs assessment data generated from individual schools. The district is required to formally seek input from school councils on the use of these funds.	$202X

Figure 2 continued

Program Description	Budget Requirements/Guidance	District Allocation
and alcohol abuse. These include such things as professional development for staff, dissemination of information, and student training and outreach efforts. The programs and related activities are to be specifically related to local identified needs and factors that are known to increase the risk for substance abuse and violence.		
IASA, Title VI (Innovative Educational Strategies)—All public school districts are allotted Title IV funds. Eight major areas are identified for the use of the Title VI funds. They are technology related to the implementation of school-based reform programs; acquisition and use of instructional and educational materials; promising education reform projects; programs to improve the higher order thinking skills of disadvantaged students and to prevent students from dropping out of school; programs to combat illiteracy; programs for the gifted and talented; school reform activities consistent with Goals 2000; and school improvement programs for Title I Schoolwide or school improvement schools. Each district uses its funds in one or more of these areas.	Funds go to the local school district by formula and the targets for programs and spending are decided at the district level. Programs and funds can go for one school or more than one school. The district decides, but is required to formally seek input from school councils on the use of these funds.	$331X

Worksheet 4—Description and Funding Information on Programs and Resources Not among Those for Which Application Is Made Through the Consolidated Plan should be completed so that the planning team can see the full picture of funds available to the district.

For each funding source, the team should list the **intent and purpose**; that is, the requirements of the funds/programs, specifically, the student population or specific services and materials for which a particular funding source must be used. Under **allowable uses**, the team should list other potential uses

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Figure 3

Example of Bridgewater School District's Worksheet 4

Source	Intent and Purpose	Allowable Uses	Means of Access	Amount
Even Start (Federal Program)	Help parents of low-income families gain the literacy and parenting skills they need to become full partners in the education of their young children.	Programs may be home-based or center-based; build upon existing services in the community. Provide three core services: early childhood education needs of children 0-7 to enhance development and prepare them for school; adult education to develop basic educational and literacy skills of parents; parent education to enhance parent-child relationships.	Competitive, throu[illegible] state department of education; deadline for application July 1.	$250X for three years
Goals 2000—Title III (Federal Program)	Supports ongoing local initiatives to improve teaching	Enhance systemic planning at the local level; implement	Competitive grants to local districts in three areas—	Allocations to local districts range from

Figure 3 continued next page

of a given funding source that offer a certain amount of flexibility in the expenditure of those funds (e.g., for a given funding source, the required use may be professional development, but allowable uses may include the purchase of materials to support teacher capacity building). Under **means of access**, include information such as whether the funds are competitive or noncompetitive and the application deadlines. In the final column, the planning team should include the **amount of funds** that are available to the district for the time period covered by the consolidated plan. In some cases, this will be an estimate based on funding for the previous year.

Figure 3 is a portion of **Worksheet 4** completed by the Bridgewater planning team.

Step Four

Allocate Resources to Programs

Allocating resources to programs is the crux of consolidated planning. This method of developing a budget differs from a traditional budgeting process where planners (usually program coordinators) are given the dollar figure for a program allocation and they decide how to spend the money. That method perpetuates program isolation, resulting in teaching and

Figure 3 continued

Source	Intent and Purpose	Allowable Uses	Means of Access	Amount
	and learning for all students through long-term efforts to promote coherent and coordinated improvements in education at the state and local levels.	components of the local plan (integration of arts into the curric., reading, early childhood, inclusion of spec. ed. and gifted ed. in school reform, integration of tech. into the curric., alternative schools, parental involvement, time management and scheduling, community involvement; research ways to improve teaching and learning; develop and maintain ways to improve parent and comm. involvement; professional development; preservice education; coordination of educational resources; construction, technology purchases, consultants for dev. of grant proposal.	local education agency improvement, professional development, and preservice education.	$20X to $140X
Instructional resource funds (state department of education)	Textbooks and instructional materials	The State Textbook Commission approves materials annually in various content areas to go on state approved lists. The lists are distributed to schools and districts along with notification of textbook allocations.	Schools and districts develop purchasing plans and submit adoption forms by April 1.	$160X

learning at the school level that is fragmented or duplicative.

When the plan precedes the budget, the planning team allocates funds to cover district or school program expenses that relate to district goals. In this way, one program at the district or school level may be funded from several different sources. Since the programs and strategies identified through the district planning process all focus on a few specific goals, the resulting instructional program is cohesive and targeted to the greatest needs.

The planning team should use a "tiered" approach to determine which programs and strategies should be funded first or which funds should be allocated first. This approach ensures that the priority programs and strategies are fully funded and that funds restricted for particular uses are allocated efficiently.

For example, if a certain funding source specifies that monies can be spent only for technology, the team should target this money first and use less restrictive sources to supplement these funds as needed. If the technology funds do not cover the cost of software for a particular program, a portion of funds that can be used for materials, supplies, or technology can supplement the funds restricted to technology; the remainder of these less restrictive funds can be used for other programs needing materials, supplies, or technology as well. However, if the less restrictive funds are allocated first (that is, if they are allocated only for technology needs (the technology funds may be left over since they cannot be budgeted for other uses, and other programs may not have enough funds to cover the costs of materials and supplies.

What follows is an example of how a planning team may decide in what order to budget programs.

Tier One: Expenses that must be taken out of each type of funds in order to adhere to legislative requirements. (This would include funds with restricted uses or administrative set-asides.)

Tier Two: Programs and strategies the district must implement immediately to meet student needs.

Tier Three: Prioritized strategies and programs to implement if funds permit.

The matrix in *Figure 4* on the next page, a simplified version of a consolidated budget, illustrates how funding sources can be combined and coordinated to support district and school programs.

Explanation: A school planning team has selected three programs to enhance its language arts instruction and curriculum: a reading program, extended learning program, and Writing Across the Curriculum (*See Column A*). The total amount needed to fund these three programs is $74,000 (*Column B*). The team is looking at three sources of funding (*Columns C, D, and E*), which in the past have been used for three separate programs. By combining these funds (*See Column F—$74,000*), the team can allocate funds to the selected programs for improvement and target the specific funding needs of each.

For example, the reading program requires funding for staff development, instructional materials, professional development. Funding Source 1 has funds available for professional development and instructional materials; Funding Source 3 has funds available for professional development and staff. By combining funds from each of these sources, the planning team can cover the cost of the reading program.

Since Funding Source 2 has funds available specifically for extended learning, all of its funds were allocated to the extended learning program. Still, these funds did not cover the full cost of the extended learning program, so a portion of the funds from Funding Source 1 ($6,000) was provided as well.

The Writing Across the Curriculum program requires funding for professional development and instructional materials. Monies from Funding Source 1 (for professional development and instructional

Figure 4

Consolidated Budget Matrix

A	B	C	D	E	F
Programs or Strategies Selected	**Total Needed for Programs or Strategies**	**Funding Source 1** Allowable expenses—*professional development, instructional materials* ***Funds Available:*** $30,000	**Funding Source 2** Allowable expenses—*extended learning* ***Funds Available:*** $24,000	**Funding Source 3** Allowable expenses—*staff and professional development* ***Funds Available:*** $20,000	***Total Funds Available:*** $74,000
Reading Program *Funding needed for instructional materials, staff, professional development*	$28,000	**Funding Source Allocation:** $14,000		**Funding Source Allocation:** $14,000	$28,000
Extended Learning Program *Funding needed for instructional materials, staff, professional development*	$30,000	$6,000	**Funding Source Allocation:** $24,000		$30,000
Writing Across the Curriculum *Funding needed for professional development, instructional materials*	$16,000	$10,000		$6,000	$16,000
	Total Needed for Programs or Strategies: $74,000	**Total Funding Source I Allocation:** $30,000	**Total Funding Source II Allocation:** $24,000	**Total Funding Source III Allocation:** $20,000	**Total Allocation:** $74,000

materials) and Funding Source 3 (for professional development) were used for this program.

The Consolidated Budget Matrix shows that even though monies from various funding sources are combined, the funds can be traced to their original source. Because program coordinators of each funding source are accountable for spending, schools and districts must be able to show what funding sources are supporting each of the improvement programs and strategies.

Consolidated planning enables schools and districts to combine funds from several sources to support improvement programs and strategies. However, consolidated planning does not allow a district to put all the funds in one pot without being able to track the funding sources that support school or district programs.

Designing and Developing a District-Specific Consolidated Budget Matrix

Planning teams should construct a consolidated budget matrix similar to *Figure 4*. The matrix should include in the left column the programs and strategies with costs broken down by category as in **Worksheet 1**. Across the top, using the information from **Worksheet 2**, the team should include all the programs that will be consolidated in the local consolidated application along with other federal, state, district, local, foundation funds. The team should then complete the matrix by filling in amounts available and allocations to the improvement programs and strategies.

After completing this matrix, the team will be able to see which programs and strategies are adequately funded and which are not. At this point, the team will need to make adjustments in the allocations and discuss alternate funding sources.

Figure 5 is a Consolidated Budget Matrix developed by the Bridgewater district planning team. The consolidated programs include Title I Basic, Title I Migrant, Title II, Title IV, and Title VI. The planning team included other funding sources to show how the selected programs and strategies would be funded over and above what the consolidated programs will cover. The consolidated Budget Matrix is primarily a planning and organizational tool. The information on the matrix will be used to complete the forms provided in the local consolidated planning application.

Step Five

Explore Funding Alternatives

After the plan is budgeted, the team will likely realize that some programs are not adequately funded and will need to explore further resources. Following are some suggestions for identifying and obtaining more funding.

1. Explore all available resources. Teams need to make sure that they are aware of all existing sources of funding (federal, state, district, and local. Often times, a phone call to a funding source to explain a need for a specific program will result in further funding or permission to use restricted funds in different ways. Federal, state, or district staff may be aware of other monies or may know about grant opportunities appropriate for the district program. Businesses are often willing to contribute to school and district programs and appreciate specific requests.

   The planning team or a subcommittee may want to routinely explore grant possibilities in *The Federal Register*, *The Foundation Directory*, or other grant information sources available from the library or the Internet.

   Educators should be aggressive and entrepreneurial in their efforts to find funding. This means making requests and writing grants.

2. The planning team may want to look for ways to phase in programs and strategies. They may decide to pilot a program at a few schools or to

Figure 5

Consolidated Budget Matrix—Bridgewater School District

Programs and Strategies	IASA Programs Included in the District's Consolidated Plan					Other Federal Programs		State Funds					
	Title I Basic	Title I Migrant	Title II	Title IV	Title VI	Even Start	Goals 2000	Professional Development	Materials	Technology	District	Local	Other
Staffing:													
Professional Development:													
Materials:													
Student Activities:													
Instructional Support:													
Other:													
Total:													

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target schools with the greatest need the first year and add others as funds become available.

3. The planning team may want to help schools rethink their use of Title I funds. Reducing the number of pull-out programs or reducing the number of resource teachers will free funds that can be used to benefit all teachers and students.

Figure 6, adapted from "How to Rethink School Budgets to Support School Transformation" (Odden, 1998), illustrates alternatives for the use of staff time. It promotes a shift from education specialists teaching a limited number of students to regular education teachers broadening their areas of responsibility **and receiving the support and professional development to do so**.

Odden points out that the reallocation of staffing funds must be done thoughtfully, sensitively, and legally. The district will need to help schools see the benefits of making changes in staffing and assist them reassigning staff to positions where they are comfortable and where students' best interests are served. The district and schools will need to examine

Figure 6

Rethinking School Budgets

Traditional Staffing	Reformed Staffing	Issues and Alternatives
Regular Education Specialists—art, music, physical education	Regular classroom teachers	Review priority needs—are these specialty areas included? Integrate specialty subjects in the regular classroom curriculum.
Teachers' Aides	Regular classroom teachers	Teachers' aides often allow time for teachers to plan together; common planning time can be built into the school day with creative planning.
Categorical Program Remedial Specialists—extra math or reading assistance to small groups; instructional assistance; staffing basic-skills computer laboratories	Regular classroom teachers	Research shows that remedial specialists do not contribute to higher achievement of students; regular classroom teachers can address through learning new classroom grouping strategies, professional development on math and reading strategies and technology; smaller class sizes needed.
Pupil Support Specialists—guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses	Regular classroom teachers	Teachers will need to teach smaller numbers of students and have ongoing professional development to develop skills in these areas.

(Adapted from Odden, 1998.)

federal, state, and district regulations that govern the way specialist resources are reallocated. The process of reallocating staff may take two-to-four years.

Step Six

Share the Budget

The budget for the consolidated plan must be developed collaboratively so that everyone may reach consensus on tough decisions. The planning team should share the proposed budget with groups of school faculties and administrators. The team needs to keep everyone in the district focused on allocating the resources to what is best for the students.

After sharing the proposed budget throughout the district, the team needs to make final revisions.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After completing the budget, review it according to the following checklist

_____1. The budget reflects needs, priorities, and goals developed in the consolidated planning process.

_____2. The budget includes a breakdown of expenses for all programs and strategies included in the consolidated plan.

_____3. The budget reflects individual school needs as well as districtwide needs.

_____4. The budget includes all funding sources available to the district.

_____5. The budget shows which programs are mandated for consolidation by the state department of education.

_____6. The budget has been examined by the planning team for compliance with the intent and purpose and the allowable expenses of the various funding sources.

_____7. The budget includes a matrix that illustrates how funds from various programs have been consolidated and allocated to support the district's improvement programs and strategies.

_____8. The planning team has made alternative funding recommendations for programs with insufficient resources.

_____9. District and school administrators and faculties reviewed and reached consensus on the budget.

If all the items on the checklist are checked, the team has completed the consolidated planning process and should use the information developed in this process (*Modules One-Eight*) to prepare the district consolidated planning application provided by their state department of education. However, the work is not done. Once the plan is written, the team must consider how the plan will be implemented, as well as how progress toward achieving district goals will be charted. The team will explore these issues in *Module Nine: Implementing the Plan* and *Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan.*

References & Resources

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Budgeting the Plan

Budgeting the Plan

Worksheet 1—Program/Strategy Expenses

District Goal	Programs or Strategies	Expenses
		Staffing: Professional Development: Materials: Student Activities: Instructional Support: Other: Total:
		Staffing: Professional Development: Materials: Student Activities: Instructional Support: Other: Total:
		Staffing: Professional Development: Materials: Student Activities: Instructional Support: Other: Total:

Budgeting the Plan

Worksheet 2—Expenses for Individual Schools

District Goal	School	Individual Need	Programs/Strategies	Expenses
				Staffing: Professional Development: Materials: Student Activities: Instructional Support: Other: Total:
				Staffing: Professional Development: Materials: Student Activities: Instructional Support: Other: Total:

Budgeting the Plan

Worksheet 3—Description and Funding Information on Programs for Which Application Is Made through the Consolidated Plan

Program Description	Budget Requirements/Guidance	District Allocation

Budgeting the Plan

Worksheet 4—Description and Funding Information on Programs and Resources Not Among those for Which Application Is Made through the Consolidated Plan

Source	Intent and Purpose	Allowable Uses	Means of Access	Amount

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NOTES

MODULE EIGHT

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Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE NINE

MAKING *Schools* MATTER

A Systematic Approach

to

Developing the Local

Consolidated Plan

9 IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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Improving Learning through Research & Development

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

9 IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

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MODULE NINE

Making Resources Matter

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About Module Nine

Module Nine describes a step-by-step process for developing of strategies to implement the consolidated plan.

Step One: Develop task lists and time lines.

Step Two: Collaborate with and communicate among all stakeholders.

Step Three: Create a foundation for change.

Step Four: Establish mutual expectations. . .

Step Five: Coordinate and integrate the implementation of the district plan and school improvement plans.

Step Six: Write the plan for implementation.

The opening vignette illustrates issues relating to implementing the consolidated plan. The module provides information that reflects current research on implementing change. Examples included throughout the module illustrate effective strategies for making the plan a reality.

The worksheets serve as organizing tools that can guide discussions of what needs to be done. They will also help document the team's work in identifying tasks and responsibilities for implementing the plan.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work.

Implementing the Plan

It was the first day of inservice for the school year at Highland Elementary. One agenda item was a review of the district's consolidated plan. The plan had been completed in June, approved in July, and now implementation was at hand.

Each administrator, teacher, and staff member received a copy of the plan at the beginning of the session. In addition, everyone was given a laminated poster of the district vision and goals to prominently display in their classroom.

One of the planning team members addressed the group, briefly walked through the plan, and answered questions. The questions focused on the best way to support the plan and move toward the district goals.

Unlike past plans, this plan was not just a document developed by a handful of individuals and delivered to the school. The school had been involved in the plan's development from the beginning. The faculty and staff nodded their heads in agreement as they read the goals and strategies that they had discussed last year with the planning team. They felt that the plan addressed real needs in the district and their school.

The faculty and staff felt like they were partners with the planning team in both the plan development and implementation. They were prepared to discuss what needed to be accomplished during the school year and identify tasks they would undertake to ensure that the goals were achieved.

Also, they wanted to identify areas where the district could support them in implementing the plan. For example, they requested district approval to bank time and dismiss the students three hours early once a week so that grade-level teams could meet and share strategies for the Cunningham Four-Block reading model they were trained in over the summer.

This was going to be an exciting year. Everyone had a clear sense of where the district needed to go, and everyone knew his or her role in moving the district in that direction. One of the teachers joked, "Our school district is like a big eighteen-wheeler; our school is one of the wheels, and we are the pistons that drive the shaft that turns the wheel."

In this module, the planning team will

- Develop a detailed task list and time line for parts of the plan that will be accomplished during the first year and a less detailed task list and time line for years two through five.
- Identify team member roles and responsibilities relating to implementation.

- Establish mechanisms for maintaining ongoing support for implementing the plan through communication with all stakeholders.
- Develop mutual expectations for what all stakeholders need to do to implement the plan.

Expected Outcome

- The team will develop an implementation plan that identifies tasks for Years 1-5 and strategies for ensuring that the tasks are carried out.

Basic Premises

- Successful implementation requires sustained and enthusiastic support from those with strategic responsibilities.
- A clear articulation of expectations and responsibilities—and accountability—creates a foundation for plan implementation.
- Plan implementation entails a complex series of activities; individuals who are responsible for tasks should be provided help and encouragement when needed.

Completing the development of a plan is cause for celebration! Ideally, over the past year, the planning team evolved into a collaborative unit that helped everyone in the district focus on broad educational goals and agree on the means to achieve those goals. However, the work has really only begun. Now is the time to translate the plan into action. Cook (1995) notes, "Most strategic plans that fail do so at the point of implementation. It is so for a variety of reasons: inertia, resistance, operational distractions, and confusion of responsibilities (just to mention a few" (p.86).

Foundations for success were laid by involving all stakeholders, facilitating broad-based decision making, and developing a plan that addresses district needs as well as needs of individual schools. Now, other activities need to take place to ensure that the support and momentum continue during the implementation process.

The planning team will support district and school staff in implementing the plan through ongoing assistance, communication, coordination, and accountability. The team addresses issues and challenges to smooth the path of implementation.

Tip: Stephen G. Haines in *Successful Strategic Planning* (1995) recommends establishing a steering committee as part of the planning team to oversee the implementation process. Haines makes the following recommendations for the steering committee:

- Conduct monthly or bimonthly meetings as the implementation process begins and then quarterly meetings once the process is functioning smoothly. The meetings must be held regularly in order to pull back from the day-to-day activities, scan the landscape and status of the strategic plan, and revise the implementation as necessary.
- Convene periodic meetings of the whole implementation team to review progress on completing identified tasks related to putting the plan into action.

The Steps of Implementing the Plan

Step One

Develop Task Lists and Time Lines

Implementation starts with developing a task list for each section of the written plan. The task list makes the plan concrete and sets the expectation that the plan will be implemented and individuals accountable for completing the tasks.

Tip: To develop a task list

- Include all activities that need to be accomplished during Year One.
- Describe each Year One task, including the individual with primary responsibility for carrying out the task, dates when the task is begun and completed, individuals who need to be involved, individuals who need to be informed, and resources needed.
- Develop a less detailed task list for Years Two-Five.
- Include periodic assessment of implementation progress.

Worksheet 1—Task List for Year One assists the team in organizing implementation tasks. The team should complete this worksheet and share it with all people responsible for the tasks.

The task list may be developed into a project plan with a time line, using a format such as a Gantt chart, which lists tasks in the order of accomplishment and depicts a time frame for what needs to happen when. Further description of the Gantt chart and other models for developing project plans may be found in books on project management. Project management software is also available. The task list, time line, or project plan should be completed in detail for Year One and in a more general format for Years Two-Five.

Step Two

Collaborate with and Communicate among All Stakeholders

Cook believes that the first requirement for successful implementation is the emphatic and relentless support of the plan from those with strategic responsibilities (p. 87). The planning team must continue to communicate the plan during implementation and promote its benefits. The team should encourage the district to be proud of its commitment to focus on improved teaching and learning.

Haines (1995) suggests strategies for communicating the plan in a corporate environment. These strategies, adapted for school districts, include

- Print the plan and distribute it to stakeholders with a simple cover letter.
- Develop handouts/overheads to standardize use by all stakeholders.
- Organize school staff meetings and district staff meetings to address questions and concerns about the plan.
- Display posters with planning themes at schools, in district offices, and in the community.
- Hand out individual (plastic) cards stating the mission, goals, and key success factors.
- Publish an internal newsletter, memo, or letter to introduce the plan (overall and in detail) and provide periodic updates.
- Publish external news releases and special public feature stories.
- Give out report cards each quarter.

(Adapted from "Ideas for Initially Communicating the Strategic Plan," p. 62)

Step Three

Create a Foundation for Change

Implementing the consolidated plan will mean that many administrators, faculty, and staff will need to do things differently. The planning team needs to understand the change process and help it happen as smoothly as possible.

Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987) share the following insights on change as it relates to school improvement:

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- Change is a process, not an event. Implementing new programs and strategies is a process that occurs over time, usually a period of years.
- Change is accomplished by individuals. Individuals must be the focus of attention in implementing a new program.
- Change is a highly personal experience. Each individual reacts differently to change; therefore, support should be geared to the diagnosed needs of the individual users.
- Change involves developmental growth in the implementer. Initially, the individual will focus on how it affects his or her work. Then, the focus will broaden to how the change affects students. The individual will gradually become interested in how other instructors are implementing it and how he or she may improve the new program or strategy.
- Change is best understood in operational terms. Teachers and others naturally relate to change in terms of what it will mean to them and how it will affect classroom practice. When change is addressed in concrete, practical terms, individuals tend to be more comfortable with implementation.
- The focus of facilitating change should be on individuals, innovations, and the context. Books, materials, and equipment alone do not make change; only people make change by altering their behavior. Those facilitating change should work with people in an adaptive, systemic way, realizing that their needs exist in particular contexts and settings. (p. 7)

These insights reinforce the importance of helping individuals adapt to change. The planning team needs to develop strategies to help individuals understand the need to change and to incorporate the changes into their professional practice. The team needs to pay close attention to expressed concerns and develop ways to address these concerns so that individuals will feel confident and comfortable with the new directions that the district may be taking.

Guskey (1990) believes that those expected to implement the plan need a precise description of how to integrate new strategies into a coherent framework. He recommends that the planning team—"purveyors of innovations"—show how new programs and strategies can be used in conjunction with others, especially familiar ones. Administrators, faculty, and staff should be commended for the many effective strategies they currently use and encouraged to build upon what is working. In this way, change seems less overwhelming.

A learning community atmosphere provides an effective context for change. Collins (1997) says, "A learning community exists when a group of people commit themselves to continual learning and to supporting others in continual learning (p.31)." From research on professional learning communities, Collins compiled the following list of activities and conditions that foster and support continual learning.

- Discussions among teachers of their instructional practices
- Collegial collaboration
- Ongoing discussions among teachers related to implementation of new strategies
- Involvement of the entire faculty in decisions related to professional development and collective inquiry
- Teacher leadership to build consensus on important issues
- Leadership that reinforces problem solving
- Shared responsibility for student learning
- Collective inquiry and collective action (p.29)

Even before the details of the consolidated plan are developed, the planning team should assess the degree to which the district operates as a learning community and seek ways to enhance these conditions. The learning community context will encourage administrators, teachers, and staff to be open to new ideas that will likely result in improved student achievement and in support for one another in the reform process.

Step Four

Establish Mutual Expectations

Once all stakeholders are familiar with the plan and agreeable to implementation, then the issue of accountability arises. Cook believes that an essential requirement of action is the thorough fusion of the plan into the performance expectations for all staff. All staff activities should be consistent with and supportive of the district's mission, goals, and objectives, as outlined in the plan.

Cook provides a format for establishing mutual expectations among stakeholders, which is included as **Worksheet 2—Establishing Mutual Expectations**.

Planning team members should work with key staff at the school and district level to develop these expectations. The process (adapted from Cook's ideas to apply to school/district staff) entails ensuring that each person

- Agrees to specific action plans. (This step may be accomplished at any time in the process.)
- Identifies, with the assistance of the planning team, what should be his or her responsibilities for implementing the plan.
- Understands the basic rationale and expected results associated with each responsibility in measurable, demonstrable, or observable terms.
- Identifies the specific performance objectives in each result area, being careful to note, when applicable, the specific action plan to which the objective applies.
- Negotiates with the planning team to establish specific mutual expectations of his/her individual performance and system support.

On the following page is an example of how **Worksheet 2** could be used to identify mutual expectations between a principal and the planning team.

Worksheet 2 lends itself to developing indicators for monitoring implementation progress (*See Module Ten—Charting Progress and Revising the Plan*) and for identifying areas where assistance is needed. Through periodic monitoring, the planning team should be able to

- Provide support to those individuals who are not able to fulfill their performance expectations
- Use collaborative decision making to determine areas where the plan needs revision

Step Five

Coordinate and Integrate the Implementation of the District Plan and School Improvement Plans

The planning team may wish to conduct workshops to help school staff integrate the district plan and their school improvement plan (both as they develop and revise their school plans, making sure school goals align with district goals, and as they implement their school plans, making sure that district and school strategies are coordinated.

The team could share linking strategies provided in *Module Seven—Linking the Pieces* and implementation strategies provided in *Module Ten—Charting Progress/Revising the Plan in Making Resources Matter.* Follow-up meetings with these school teams would allow for implementation issues at each school to be addressed.

Example Worksheet 2

I Will Do This:	So That:	My Performance Expectations Are:	Linkage With the District Plan:	The District Support Required Is:
Rearrange class schedules so that teachers from the same grade will have 1.5 hours of common planning time three times a week.	From outside reading specialists and from discussions among themselves, teachers will learn effective instructional strategies applicable to their grade level in order to focus on the district-wide need to improve reading scores.	Teachers will feel more confident in implementing new reading strategies, strategies will be implemented in the classroom, and students' reading scores will improve.	Districtwide adoption of the Cunningham Reading Model	The district will provide a three-day institute for teachers on the Cunningham model and reading specialists that will work with each grade level of teachers at a school on a monthly basis throughout the school year.

Step Six

Writing the Plan for Implementation

An implementation plan is generally not required as part of the consolidated plan application; however, a written implementation plan can serve as an operational mechanism for seeing the consolidated plan put into action. The plan should describe the extended roles and responsibilities of the planning team. The plan should also include the Year 1 time line and tasks for implementing programs, communicating with stakeholders, and periodically assessing the progress of the implementation. The plan should document agreed-upon expectations for district and school staff and implementation team members so that the team can follow up to see if expectations are being fulfilled.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After completing a draft of the Implementation Plan, review it according to the following checklist:

___ 1. The plan includes a detailed task list and time line for the first year of implementation and a more general task list and time line for the second through fifth years. Specific tasks and persons responsible are included.

___ 2. The Year One Task List includes periodic assessment of the plan implementation.

___ 3. The planning team developed strategies to establish a foundation for change among the administrators, faculty, and staff.

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___ 4. The implementation plan includes strategies to communicate the consolidated plan to all stakeholders and provide periodic updates on its progress.

___ 5. The team developed a process for establishing mutual expectations among staff and stakeholders.

___ 6. The team developed a process for holding staff accountable for their responsibilities in implementing the plan.

___ 7. The team included strategies for providing support and encouragement to staff who need assistance in their implementation responsibilities.

If all the items on the checklist are checked, the planning team is ready to facilitate implementation of the plan and chart its progress, as described in *Module Ten—Charting Progress and Revising the Plan.*

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APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Implementing the Plan

Implementing the Plan

Worksheet 1—Task List for Year One

Task	Projected Starting Date/ Projected Completion Date	Person Responsible	People Who Should Be Involved	People to Be Informed	Resources Needed	Date Task Completed

Implementing the Plan

Worksheet 2—Establishing Mutual Expectations

I Will Do This:	So That:	My Performance Expectations Are:	Linkage with the District Plan:	The District Support Required Is:
Responsibilities for Plan Implementation	***Results must be** consistent with mission, goals, oblectives; measurable, demonstrable, or observable; direct immediate consequences; commensurate with decision making prerogative and resources*	***Specific measures** in terms of time, money, quality, and/or quantity for each result; specific demonstration of results—cause/effect; observable indicators of specific results*	***Reference to applicable** strategies and activities*	***Expression of the district's** commitment of energy and resources to the performance expectations*

MODULE NINE

9

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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MODULE TEN

MAKING [illegible] MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

10 CHARTING PROGRESS & REVISING THE PLAN

Region IV Comprehensive Center at AEL

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MODULE TEN

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Making Resources Matter guides school districts as they develop a consolidated plan for programs and resources. The modules address all components of the planning process and offer suggestions for developing a plan to use resources effectively. The series addresses particular issues and challenges related to districtwide planning.

The modules reinforce themes of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act—data-based decision making, aligned school reform elements, research-based programs and strategies, effective use of resources through consolidation, involvement of all stakeholders, and ongoing evaluation and revision for continuous improvement. The series includes

Module One: Overview

Module Two: Establishing the Team

Module Three: Creating Vision and Mission Statements

Module Four: Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Module Five: Identifying and Selecting Research-Based Programs and Strategies

Module Six: Planning Professional Development

Module Seven: Linking the Pieces

Module Eight: Budgeting the Plan

Module Nine: Implementing the Plan

Module Ten: Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Each module includes information, examples, worksheets, and checklists to assist teams in a step-by-step approach to planning. Technical assistance providers, state department of education staff, or district staff may use the modules as the basis for workshops to train planning teams. Planning teams may use the modules to work independently of outside technical assistance.

In addition, although the module series provides a comprehensive approach to planning, each module may be used as a stand-alone guide for the particular topic it addresses.

Using the Series

Whether you have existing plans and well-established teams and processes already in place or have not begun planning in a systematic way, this series can be useful.

Making Resources Matter is a flexible tool that district teams can customize to fit local needs. Examine the content of each module and select only the information and tools you need to assist in the planning process.

Also, many districts face tight deadlines for developing a consolidated plan. Ideally, a thorough district planning process takes at least a year. However, most districts do not have the luxury of taking this long. You need to prioritize your tasks carefully not to shortcut the process, but to focus your efforts to ensure the result is a high-quality plan that will guide district educational efforts toward high student achievement. The "chunked" format of the series allows teams to select tasks efficiently.

MAKING *Resources* MATTER

A Systematic Approach to Developing the Local Consolidated Plan

10 CHARTING PROGRESS & REVISING THE PLAN

Region IV
Comprehensive
Center at AEL

By
Diana Bowman
& Jean Williams

SERVE
Improving Learning through Research & Development

MODULE TEN

Making Resources Matter

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MODULE TEN

About Module Ten

Module Ten describes a step-by-step process for developing a formative evaluation plan.

Step One: Develop indicators of progress.

Step Two: Organize the data collection process for charting progress.

Step Three: Review both implementation and impact data.

Step Four: Address budget considerations for evaluation.

Step Five: Revise the plan based evaluation data.

The opening vignette illustrates issues and concerns relating to the ongoing evaluation of programs. The module provides strategies and examples that the district planning team can use periodically to assess implementation and impact on student achievement.

The worksheets serve as tools to organize data collection and record impact.

The "Reviewing and Organizing Checklist" at the end of the module will help the team review its work.

Charting Progress & Revising the Plan

Martin Andrews, curriculum coordinator for Morgantown elementary schools, scratched his head. "Research says that it takes at least three years to see results from a major improvement initiative. If we're implementing an ineffective program, three years is too long to find that out where our kids are concerned." Obviously, he was nervous about the decision to implement Integrated Thematic Learning across the district.

Martin was meeting with Carol Hernandez, a member of the district planning team that developed the evaluation for the consolidated plan. Carol agreed. "That is too long to wait, but there are ways you can chart progress along the way. Let's see if we can come up with some indicators that the program is working and the children are making progress. We'll develop a formative evaluation plan with frequent assessments to see how well teachers are implementing the program and how well children are learning. We should have a pretty good idea of the effectiveness of the program long before three years."

"First of all, let's look at the overall goals for Integrated Thematic Learning. What will you want to see after three years of implementation?"

Martin responded, "We're looking at improved student achievement, measured by the state assessment. We want all of our students achieving at the proficient level and above. We want the students to be able to work well in teams and to be able to take a global approach to solving problems without being bounded by content areas."

"OK," said Carol. "Now let's take a look at what you can realistically expect after one year. In terms of student achievement, you should see some improvement, but the results will not be that great with teachers and students alike getting used to a new way of doing things. Therefore, we need to look at other indicators, like student behaviors and practices and the degree to which teachers are implementing the program."

"For example, what would you hope to see by the end of the year if you were to observe a classroom where this program had been implemented?"

Martin thought, "Well, I'd like to see students working effectively in teams on investigative projects—being on task and cooperating. I'd like to see them working on projects that require them to integrate reading, math, writing, social studies, science, and art. I'd like to see them taking a problem-solving approach to learning."

Carol asked, "What would you like to see the teachers doing in the classroom after one year of implementing the Integrated Thematic Learning program?"

MODULE TEN

Martin replied, "I'd like to see teachers applying the strategies they learned from their training this past summer with confidence. That is, I'd like to see them facilitating cooperative learning groups, helping students design investigations, ensuring that students address all required standards in their investigations, and periodically assessing the students to see that they are learning."

Carol said, "You have a great start on developing a formative evaluation. Now you need to get a little more concrete with each of your indicators. You may want to work with a committee of teachers to develop checklists, perhaps with Likert scale rating systems. These checklists can be completed several times during the year by observations, surveys, and interviews. Your committee should be able to chart the progress of the students as well as that of the teachers. The committee will also be able to detect possible trouble spots, although you should be cautious about jumping to conclusions while everyone is just getting his or her bearings in the program."

"I feel much better now," said Martin. "I feel like I can have a handle on what is going on without having to wait for results from the state assessment. Plus, I like the fact that we'll have input from the teachers on how well they feel the program is working and their comfort level in using new instructional strategies. This gives us the opportunity to be more proactive in making the program work for our kids."

In this module, the planning team will

- Review the purpose of formative evaluation
- Develop performance indicators for each goal and objective and identify sources of data to indicate progress toward meeting objectives
- Include evaluation as a budgetary item
- Institutionalize an ongoing evaluation and plan revision process

Expected Outcomes

- Performance indicators related to program implementation and student achievement goals
- A formative evaluation plan that charts the degree of implementation and implementation impact

Basic Premises

- The plan is a living document that should be continually reviewed and improved.
- Charting progress is an essential piece of plan implementation.
- Change happens slowly; assessment should measure progress (and successes) along a series of indicators that lead up to full implementation.
- Small victories, such as reaching benchmarks or achieving short-term goals, should be planned and celebrated.

Charting implementation of the plan and assessing progress toward the district goals are critical components of the improvement process. Data collected through an evaluation provide a substantive foundation for plan revisions.

Periodic assessment of progress during implementation is called formative evaluation. Formative evaluation opens the door to identifying and addressing problems in the early stages of implementation so that the program can be adjusted. Formative evaluation differs from summative evaluation, which assesses outcomes after a program has been completed. Information obtained through summative evaluation is important for determining success but it does not allow for mid-course improvements. Because consolidated plans and improvement plans are considered living documents, they must change as circumstances change or as better directions are determined. Frequent and ongoing formative assessment enables the planning team to maintain a useful blueprint for improvement.

Formative evaluation identifies barriers and problems during implementation, and it also allows for celebrations of small successes. Kotter (1996) suggests that celebrations make a difference in staff morale during the change process. In fact, he believes that small successes should be incorporated in the implementation process to ensure that staff have the satisfaction of experiencing progress. Kotter explains

> Major change takes time, sometimes lots of time. Zealous believers will often stay the course no matter what happens. Most of the rest of us expect to see convincing evidence that all the effort is paying off. Nonbelievers have even higher standards of proof. They want to see clear data indicating that the changes are working and that the change process isn't absorbing so many resources in the short term as to endanger the organization. (p. 119)

The Year One Task List should include frequent assessments of programs and strategies, with opportunities to review the data, make mid-course adjustments, and **celebrate successes**. Assessment data should include information on both how well the program is being implemented and how well the students are progressing.

The Steps to Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Step One

Develop Indicators of Progress

When conducting an evaluation of any type, first determine what will be assessed and the type of data needed. Using the identified goals and objectives, the team can develop indicators that show what the attainment of the goals and objectives "looks like." Performance indicators help evaluators decide what type of data to collect to show the extent to which a specific program objective is achieved.

As stated in *The Guidebook on Developing Performance Indicators* (1997), performance indicators

- Provide a measure of accountability to assess the effectiveness and worth of a particular program
- Serve as a mechanism to monitor program progress and to provide data for mid-course corrections as needed
- Identify areas in which improvement is needed
- Provide performance information on program progress and accomplishments that staff can share with stakeholders (p.3)

The following example illustrates the process of developing an indicator from a goal.

Through its needs assessment process, Bridgewater school district identified increasing parent involvement as one of its goals. The objectives for this goal are to have parents serve on the advisory council, to increase the use of parent volunteers in the classroom, to increase parent involvement in homework activities, and to increase the number of parents who feel welcome in the school.

Goal: To increase parents' involvement in their children's education.

Objective One: Have parents serve on the advisory council.

Objective Two: Use parent volunteers in all classrooms on an ongoing basis.

Objective Three: Increase parents involvement in supporting their children in homework activities.

Objective Four: Increase the number of parents who feel that they have easy access to and comfortable communication with their children's teachers.

From these objectives, the following indicators may be developed:

Indicator One: Two parents will be selected as members of the advisory council. These parents will attend monthly meetings and participate as full members of the council.

Indicator Two: Each class will use parent volunteers in the classroom three times a week.

Indicator Three: Each teacher in grades K-3 will develop ten Homepacks to be used on a rotating basis; each week ten students in each K-3 class will take the Homepacks home for a week, parents will work with their children on recommended activities and sign a sheet noting what activities were completed.

Indicator Four: Each teacher will make a personal contact to each parent regarding the progress of their child on a monthly basis; parents will report frequent and friendly contacts with their children's teachers.

Step Two

Organize the Data Collection Process for Charting Progress

Once the planning team has identified indicators for each district goal and objective, the group should identify the types of data needed and the data sources. Furthermore, the team should identify individuals to collect the data and deadlines for periodic progress checks.

> **Example:** After the Bridgewater planning team identified indicators for each of the district goals and objectives, it identified dates for periodic progress checks. The team determined the kinds of data needed based on the progress indicators for increasing parent involvement, then identified the sources for the data.

Indicator One Progress Check

An implementation team member will check by October 1 to see if two parents have been selected as members of the advisory council. In January, March, and May, data on the parents' attendance and participation at the meetings can be gathered. (Sources: school administrator, school office records)

Indicator Two Progress Check

Data will be collected from parent volunteer sign-in sheets for each classroom for November, January, March, and May. (Source: school office records)

Indicator Three Progress Check

Data on the frequency with which Homepacks are sent home will be collected from each K-3 teacher, and data on the parents working with their child will be collected from the signed sheets returned to the school. This data will be collected in December, March, and May. An implementation team member will also ask teachers to complete an informal survey in May for their input on success of the Homepack program in meeting Objective Three. (Sources: teacher records, signed Homepack sheets, teacher survey)

Indicator Four Progress Check

An implementation team member will gather data from the teachers on their contacts with parents in December, March, and May. Also, a survey (written or telephone) of parents will indicate their perceptions of their access to their child's teacher and the "friendliness" of the contacts. (Sources: teacher records, parent survey)

After the team has determined types and sources of data and set intervals for collecting the data, the group needs to identify persons responsible for collecting the data and deadlines for collecting the data. This information needs to be recorded and provided to team members. **Worksheet 1—Organizational Matrix for Charting Progress Toward District Goals** assists the planning team in organizing the formative evaluation process.

In the example on the next page, **Worksheet 1** has been completed for Bridgewater school district's goal of increasing parent involvement.

Example Worksheet 1—Organizational Matrix for Charting Progress Toward District Goals

Goal:

Objectives	Indicators	Progress Check Method	Sources for Data	Person(s) Responsible	Deadlines for Periodic Assessments
Have parents serve on the advisory council.	1. Two parents will be selected as members of the advisory council.	1. See if parents have been selected to serve on the council.	1. Team leader of advisory council.	Implementation team member (name)	1. October 1
	2. They will attend monthly meetings of the council.	2. See if the parent members of the council have attended monthly meetings.	2. Attendance records of council meetings.		2. January, March, and May
	3. They will participate as full members.	3. Determine their level of participation.	3. Team leader of advisory council.		3. January, March, and May
Use parent volunteers in all classrooms on an ongoing basis.	1. Use parent volunteers in each classroom three times a week.	1. Follow up on parents volunteering in the classroom.	1. Check on parent volunteer log in the office.	Implementation team member (name)	1. January, March, and May
Increase parent involvement in supporting their child in homework activities.	1. Each K-3 teacher will develop ten Homepacks to be taken home by students.	1. Follow up to see if teachers have developed Homepacks.	1. Contact teachers.	Implementation team member (name)	1. October 1

Objectives	Indicators	Progress Check Method	Sources for Data	Person(s) Responsible	Deadlines for Periodic Assessments
	2. Each week ten students will take Homepacks home for a week.	**2. See if students are taking Homepacks home.**	**2. Examine teacher records.**		**2. December, March, and May**
	3. Parents will work with their child on activities and sign a sheet noting which activities were completed.	3. Determine if parents are working with their child.	3. Examine returned parent sheets.		3. December, March, and May
Increase the number of parents who feel they have easy access to and communication with their child's teachers.	1. Each teacher will make a monthly, personal contact to each parent regarding the progress of his or her child.	1. See if teachers are making contacts.	1. Examine teacher contact logs.	Implementation team member (name)	1. December, March, and May
	2. Parents will report frequent and friendly contacts with their children's teachers.	2. See if parents feel like contacts with teachers are frequent and friendly.	2. Phone survey.		2. May

Step Three

Review Both Implementation and Impact Data

Chart whether or not tasks on the Year One Task List are accomplished on time. Planning team members can take responsibility for following up on each task on the Year One Task List and the members can report on the tasks at the meetings. This type of review can identify points of early intervention, as well as opportunities for celebration.

Assess the degree to which programs are being implemented and their impact. **Worksheet 2—Consolidated Plan Formative Evaluation Implementation and Impact Check** is useful in periodically determining the degree of program impact. The sheet provides useful data related to each program or strategy on

- The degree of implementation
- The perceived impact to date
- Changes in implementation
- Reflections on the process
- Reasons why the implementation was incomplete

Worksheet 2 is particularly helpful in gathering perceptual data. It invites reflections and inferences related to implementation that objective data cannot capture.

The planning team should decide how often to collect this data. The team also needs to decide who should provide this data (building-level administrators, teachers, or implementation team members) and how the data should be obtained (through interviews or focus groups with implementors or by requesting implementors to complete a survey and submit by mail or by electronic means).

Assess student progress in relation to district goals. Although student progress is assessed formally in an annual state assessment, data from interim assessments can identify areas where students are improving and areas where little progress is occurring.

Reviewing the degree of implementation along with student progress will provide information on whether

- The plan implementation is progressing well and is apparently resulting in student achievement
- The implementation is progressing well and is apparently having little or no impact on student achievement
- The implementation is not progressing well

The planning team needs to carefully consider reasons why the plan might appear not to be working. Rather than jumping to conclusions about the need to revise the plan, the team should ask such questions as

- Has enough time passed to reasonably expect an improvement in student achievement?
- Do the teachers need more time, support, or professional development to be proficient at implementing new programs?
- Are the teachers and administrators supportive of the plan and willing to make necessary changes for implementation?
- Is the new program meeting the needs of the students?

Reviewing data from various sources will provide a complete picture and help the team make decisions about program changes.

Step Four

Address Budget Considerations for Evaluation

The strategies for charting progress are important and need to be undertaken or overseen by the planning team. When the budget is planned, funds need to be provided for these evaluation tasks. The amount should be sufficient to cover such expenses as people's time to design and carry out these strategies, paper and printing expenses (for surveys), long distance phone calls (for interviews), and time to summarize and report the data.

As the planning team develops the evaluation plan, it will need to estimate the time and resources involved. Will a consultant be hired? Will a person, or persons, in the district undertake evaluation activities, and will they be compensated for their time? What kinds of resources will be allocated to collecting, summarizing, and reviewing the data? If the implementation team agrees that revision is warranted based on the data, what time and resources

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will they be given to undertake the task of revising, gaining input from stakeholders, communicating the changes, and supporting implementation?

Step Five

Revise the Plan Based on Implementation Progress Data

If the planning team agrees that adjustments to the plan are necessary, the group will essentially follow the same process as outlined in previous modules. The cycle begins again and is ongoing.

That is, after a needs assessment, derived in part from the evaluation data gathered to chart the plan's progress, the planning team needs to review existing programs and/or programs not currently being implemented, plan professional development, and readjust the budget. The team also needs to communicate with all stakeholders and gather their recommendations.

Ideally, district and school planning should be institutionalized as part of the day-to-day workings of the system. The process is never complete; districts and schools need mechanisms to ensure that staff and resources are available to keep the plan evolving for continuous school improvement.

Reviewing & Organizing Checklist

After completing the plan for Charting Progress and Revising the Plan, review it according to the following criteria:

____ 1. The implementation includes frequent assessment of programs and review of data; periodic assessment is included in the Year One Task List.

____ 2. The implementation includes communicating evaluation results to all stakeholders and celebrating successes.

____ 3. Indicators have been developed for each objective for district goals.

____ 4. Types and sources of data have been identified for each indicator.

____ 5. Persons responsible for collecting data and deadlines for doing so have been identified.

____ 6. The process for charting progress will assess the degree to which the district has achieved its goals and objectives.

____ 7. The process for charting progress will assess both student progress and the degree to which the plan has been implemented.

____ 8. The team has identified resources necessary to carry out a formative evaluation of the plan.

____ 9. The plan includes procedures and resources to allow for ongoing evaluation and planning.

If all the items on the Review and Organizing Checklist are checked, the team is ready to proceed with full implementation, which is a continuous improvement process that targets needs and uses resources to their best advantage. The implementation and impact data collected in the formative evaluation process capture emerging needs and issues that enable the team to revise the plan as needed so that the district progresses toward its goals.

References & Resources

Kotter, John. (1996). *Leading change.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Yap, K.O. (1997). *Guidebook on developing performance indicators.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Laboratory.

APPENDIX A

Worksheets for Charting Progress & Revising the Plan

Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Worksheet 1—Organizational Matrix for Charting Progress Toward District Goals

Goal:

Objectives	Indicators	Progress Check Method	Sources for Data	Person(s) Responsible	Deadlines for Periodic Assessments

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Charting Progress and Revising the Plan

Worksheet 2—Consolidated Planning Formative Evaluation Implementation and Impact Check

Objective	Indicators	Program, Activity, or Strategy	Date of Implementation	Date of Implementation	Degree of Implementation*	Impact Y or N	Evidence of Actual Impact on Educational Practice and/or Student Learning

* I=Implemented; IP=Implemented Partially; NI= Not Implemented

Adapted by the Region IV Comprehensive Center from Kentucky Local Consolidated Planning resource materials

Worksheet 2—Consolidated Planning Formative Evaluation Implementation and Impact Check

Outcomes, Observations, New Data, Adjustments in Implementation	Reflections on Implementation and Impact Relative to Goals and Objectives	Reasons Implementation Was Incomplete or Expected Impact Did Not Occur	Adjustments to Ensure Implementation and Appropriate Impact

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NOTES

NOTES

MODULE TEN

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